

Safety. I recognize and am thankful that the number of coal miners killed on the job fell from 67 in 2002 to 55 deaths in 2003. And while mountaintop mining may not be as dangerous as deep coal mining, there are other trade offs.

Jobs. It appears that the local residents do not benefit much from the extraction of coal by giant machines that rip off the top of the mountain to get at coal. True, in some areas there are coal-fired plants that use the coal, but these are so efficient these days, there are few permanent jobs. A lot of public support for mountaintop mining is based upon a misconception that it will create many jobs. And what happens to the rest of the mountain top that has been leveled? I understand, for example, that 15-25 percent of West Virginia mountains have been leveled for mining. For the most part, what remains is abandoned, unproductive, and does not contribute to the local tax base or general jobs.

Regeneration of the forest. I take exception to the introductory statement on page ES-3 that the "natural succession by trees...was slowed." Slowed? These forests have been taken down to stump many times in the past centuries and were able to regenerate. Previously, you could have stood in the same place Daniel Boone walked and see the same species of trees that had been cut and regrown. Do you truly believe that could happen again? The EIS introductory statements cannot mean that in the same way the forest can be what it was before. The forest is not able to grow back the same way it did in past eras. It is different this time around. There is no SOIL on which to grow. There is not the natural flow of waters that would be held by the soil that is now gone. This is simply not some problem that can be managed by some forestry plan. This is not some "cap" that you take off and put back ("recovery efforts") which is the impression that some pro-mining interests make. Everything that was the forest is gone. It is no more.

We all live downstream. The page ES-4 statistic is that only ...("1.2% of streams) were covered by valley fills from 1985 to 2001." This statement minimizes the overall effect of valley fills. A total of 6,800 fills sounds like a lot of affected communities to me. In hollows where the sun is shaded much of the day because of the steepness of the mountains, it does not take much in the way of valley fills to accentuate the effect of unimpeded water to those downstream. I am mindful that it is the mountaintop that is being taken away, so that water flows faster and quicker right from the beginning.

Macroinvertebrates. Before I went to college, I was a stream monitor in my home neighborhood. I understand well how the smallest changes can affect those insect harbingers of an unhealthy stream. In Virginia, for example, you can still see the changes in the river bank that were wrought by English colonial traders in the 1600s when they altered rivers (and the affected streams) to access the cotton offloading sites. We look for the tiniest of eddies and current changes in feeder streams to find the macroinvertebrates that tell us about the health of the stream. I can only imagine what the whoosh of a spring rain does in an area that has been suddenly in-filled as a part of mountaintop mining. It's probably all gone. I doubt that there is any life left.

"Require reclamation with trees as the post mining land use." (Page ES-8) I am very interested in how this can be done. Does this mean make it the way it was before? Do you truck in tons and tons of forest loam of the kind that is wastefully pushed over into the valleys along with the trees in the first place? And where would you get the soil in which to plant the new trees? Does not that imply that you would have to dig up some other pristine place to find the very same kind of soil in which the trees grew before mountaintop mining was begun? So, now TWO places would be befouled?

I appreciate all the studies and work that has been done to date to document the effect mountaintop mining has on the environment. In fact, the studies show that considerable damage has been done. The result should be that we reduce the occurrence of mountaintop mining.

I do not believe that it should be continued until all the mountain tops are gone. The EIS does not go far enough in requiring protections for valley fills, it does not really save the habitats for all categories of animals, and it does not mitigate damage to the water system created by mountaintop mining, in my view. The EIS is a start. It should not be considered our society's approval to continue mountaintop mining as we do today.

Thank you,

Kara L. Kukovich
Kara L. Kukovich

19-2-4

1-9

7-5-4

10-2-4

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 11:39 AM -----

Kenneth Kukovich
<kukovichlockhart@mind
spring.com>
To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc: Subject: Kenneth M. Kukovich Comment on Mountaintop

Mining EIS
01/04/2004 11:46 PM
Please respond to
kukovichlockhart

<?xml:namespace prefix = o ns =
"urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />
Kenneth M. Kukovich
<?xml:namespace prefix = st1 ns =
"urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:smarttags" />3901 N. 13th Street
Arlington, VA 22201
H: (703) 525-8592
kukovichlockhart@mindspring.com

January 4, 2004

Mr. John Forren
U.S. EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
mountaintop.r3@epa.gov

Re: Comment on the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement
(Draft EIS)
on Mountaintop Coal Mining and Associated Valley Fills.

Dear Mr. Forren:

I have had the experience of being on a mountaintop mining site for two
continuous weeks. I believe my observations and comments may be of
value in your review of the EIS.

My general comment is that extraction of coal by mountaintop mining is a

net loss. The energy we gain is at the expense the destruction of the
habitat, the interruption of natural water flows and purification, and
the sheer change in the topography and geology of an area.

The habitat is forever changed. The forest and its soil that is scraped
off the mountain is not the same despite the "restoration" that is made
after the coal is taken out. I realize that these are private lands.
However, we are all stewards of the earth, and this extreme method of
extraction in some of our most valuable areas of biodiversity is
something for which our next generations will not forgive us.

The EIS studies have documented but I believe minimized the danger to
water supplies. A restored mountaintop mine site initially looks as
manicured as a golf course. The rip- rapped new drainage paths, and the
holding ponds appear to set the foundation for water to begin its path
to the ocean. Of course, there is nothing like the forest into which
such rain fell where it was purified by the layers of sediments and
rocks built up over centuries. I understand that elsewhere in the
country we are seeking areas of farmland and natural marshland to
naturally purify the water instead of using chemicals and mechanical
means to cleanse our water. So why do we allow a functioning ecosystem
to be destroyed in the case of mountaintop mining?

Finally, I heard it said, and read by mountaintop mining advocates, that
such "leveling" of the mountains is actually a good thing, that it will
bring jobs and create opportunity for those who have not had it because
of the mountains. It would seem a reasonable proposal, then, that
mountaintop mining be halted until all of the currently cleared-off
mountains are full of fair-paying permanent jobs by environmentally and
economically sustainable industries.

Sincerely,

Kenneth M. Kukovich

9-2-2

7-5-2

5-1-2

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/07/2004 03:42 PM -----

"jalefra@lanset.com" <jalefra@lanset.com>
To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc: 01/06/2004 02:57
Subject: Please Stop Destructive Mountaintop Removal

Mining

PM

Dear Mr. John Forren, Project Manager,

Please stop the destruction of mountaintop removal mining.

Sincerely,

John L
(address withheld)
(address withheld), CA 00000
jalefra@lanset.com

| 1-9

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/12/2004 02:49 PM -----

Alexandra Lamb
<gwrenn@ucla.edu>
To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc: 01/06/2004 10:33 AM
Subject: Mountaintop Mining/Valley Fill DEIS

Mr. John Forren
U.S. EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Forren:

I would like to comment on the Draft programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) on mountaintop coal mining and associated valley fills in Appalachia released by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Office of Surface Mining, and West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection.

The Draft EIS confirms that mountaintop coal mining and valley fills in Appalachia have caused massive, irreparable environmental damage, including the destruction or degradation of approximately 1200 miles of headwater streams and hundreds of square miles of forest.

Despite this devastation caused by mountaintop coal mining, the preferred alternative (Alternative 2) would undermine existing environmental protections and permit the destruction of an additional 350 square miles of mountains, streams, and forests. Furthermore, it is inaccurate and misleading to describe the replacement of native hardwood forests, which are biologically diverse and offer critical wildlife habitat, with grassland plateaus or replanted hardwood forest as "reclamation."

| 1-10

I also strongly disagree with the Draft EIS claim that the preferred alternative "would support efficient, environmentally responsible production of energy resources." It is an abhorrent waste of our nation's natural resources to mine coal by blowing up mountains and burying entire streams and valleys in waste. The EPA is wrong to support – at any cost – coal power, which produces more air pollution and contributes more toward global warming than any other electricity source, rather than promoting energy conservation and efficiency and renewable energy sources. I expect the federal government to conserve our natural resources and to promote responsible stewardship of the environment.

| 1-9

I urge the EPA to amend the Draft EIS to protect Appalachia's natural resources.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Alexandra Lamb
13250 Chandler Boulevard
Sherman Oaks, CA 91401

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 11:30 AM -----

"Lamb, Sloane T."
<LambST@bernstein.com>
write.earl@mail.house.gov
Subject: Draft EIS mountaintop coal mining
01/06/2004 12:04 PM
To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc: senator@wyden.senate.gov, oregon@gsmith.senate.gov,

Mr. John Forren
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Forren:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on mountaintop coal mining and associated valley fills in Appalachia.

Mountaintop coal mining and valley fills have caused widespread and permanent damage to the Appalachian environment, as is made evident in the Draft EIS. Such activities have led to the degradation or destruction of vast stretches of forest and more than 1000 miles of headwater streams, imperiled wildlife, and destroyed communities.

The preferred alternative in the Draft EIS would, among other things, eliminate the surface mining rule that makes it illegal to disturb areas within 100 feet of streams unless it can be demonstrated that they will be harmed. This not only enables the mining companies to obtain permits that can result in serious destruction too easily, but it removes the onus of protecting our environment from the EPA, where it belongs.

Our country's natural resources are not limited to coal and natural gas. Indeed, our country counts among its natural resources the very habitat

being irrevocably damaged by these obscene practices by the coal-mining industry. The EPA should not condone the destruction of additional habitat--mountains, forests and streams--at the expense of furthering the production of coal power, an industry that contributes more toward air pollution than any other source of electricity. Instead, your agency should be promoting energy conservation and efficient and renewable energy sources.

I therefore urge the EPA to amend the Draft EIS.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Sloane T. Lamb
2835 NE 27th Avenue
Portland, OR 97212

Sloane T. Lamb
Global Marketing and Communications
AllianceBernstein Institutional Investment Management
A Unit of Alliance Capital, L.P.
www.institutional.alliancebernstein.com
Bus.: 503-493-4301
Fax: 415-217-8111
lambst@bernstein.com

1-9

1-10

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Melissa Lambert
West Virginia Wesleyan College
59 College Avenue
Buckhannon, WV 26201

31 October 2003

US EPA (3ES30)
c/o Mr. John Forren
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130

Dear Mr. Forren:

I am writing in regards to the current Environmental Impact Statement on mountain top removal mining and valley fills. According to this statement, current and future mining operations could potentially result in the loss of 1,500 acres of forest. It also states that "...scientists have found little evidence to support coal industry claims that modern reclamation can bring new life to land that is flattened by mountaintop removal." From 1985 to 2001, mountaintop removal operations buried 724 miles of Central Appalachian streams. Overall, however, 1,200 miles of streams have been impacted by valley fills. This harms aquatic life downstream from these fills and produces Selenium in these same streams. At the current rate of mountaintop removal operations, 2,200 miles of Appalachian forests will be lost by 2012. All this information comes straight from the EIS.

However, even though this report catalogues both the devastation already incurred and the threat ongoing mountaintop removal operations pose to Appalachian streams, forests, and aquatic life, it does not advise against its practice. Inconsistent with its own findings, the recommendations included in the EIS illustrate blatant disregard to the documented devastation of mountaintop removal mining and valley fills. Also, absent from this document, but equally devastating, is the impact of mountaintop removal mining on communities adjacent to these operations. Blasting, valley fills, persistent flooding, and forced displacement, among other factors, continues to plague coalfield communities. Not only is mountaintop removal permanently altering West Virginia's environment, it is permanently depopulating many coalfield towns.

In conclusion, based on the previously stated reasons, the current EIS is simply unacceptable. I demand, as a resident of West Virginia, that the EPA draft environmental policies that reflect - rather than ignore - its own findings on mountaintop removal's environmental damage in our state. We can do better than this.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Melissa Lambert

Melissa Lambert

18 Oct 03
503 Westwood Ct
Sec 4 42503

John Forren
15 EPA (3ES30)
1650 Arch St
Philadelphia, PA 19130

Dear Mr. Forren,

I oppose mountaintop removal and valley fills and any change in the buffer zone rules. I'm disappointed and angry that the federal government ignored its own studies when it exposed mountaintop removal rather than strengthening protections for people and the environment.

Thank you.

(Denise Lamobaw)

1-9

1-9

1-10

4-2

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 01:58 PM -----

"djmlancaster@cox.net"
To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc: <djmlancaster@cox.net>
Subject: Please Stop Destructive Mountaintop Removal Mining
01/06/2004 03:03 PM

Dear Mr. John Forren, Project Manager,

I grew up in West Virginia. There is no more beautiful state. My father ran many of the mines in West Virginia and Kentucky. I strongly urge you to amend the EPA's draft environmental impact statement so as to stop mountaintop removal mining. I find it unconscionable that the Bush administration plans to continue to let coal companies destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests, bury streams and destroy communities.

The Bush administration must consider alternatives that stop the mountaintop removal mining and then implement measures to protect natural resources and communities in Appalachia. No amount of coal is worth the destruction of streams, forests, wildlife and communities. I urge you to immediately amend the draft EIS accordingly.

Sincerely,

Jackie McQuade Lancaster

Jackie Lancaster
339 East J Street
Chula Vista, CA 91910
djmlancaster@cox.net

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/09/2004 02:49 PM -----

Susan Lander
<sueland@ccountry.com>
To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc:
Subject: Amend EPA environmental impact statement
01/01/2004 11:58 AM

I am dismayed by the plans to continue to allow mining practices in Appalachia which would level mountain tops, and do serious damage to forests, streams, and communities.

According to the draft EIS, the environmental effects of mountaintop removal are both severely damaging and permanent. Despite this, there seem to be no protections for either the natural resources (forests, wildlife, streams) or for the communities that depend on these resources.

Worst of all, the "preferred alternative" for dealing with the massive problems posed by mountain top removal mining ignores the administration's own studies!

I urge you to turn to alternatives that protect natural resources and communities on Appalachia.

Susan Lander
Ashland, Oregon

1-9

1-9

John Forren
U.S. EPA (3ES30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

REC'D JAN 02 2004

Mr. John Forren,

I am writing to you, in defense of our precious environment. I will start by saying I have never written so many environmental defense letters, as I have since Bush, Jr. took office. Daily I find myself wondering why this administration favors corporations over our environment, our future, our children's health and our own. Is money that precious? How precious will it be when all of our natural resources, our clean rivers, our clean air - are gone? I have learned one thing above all else while growing into an adult: Even if all material things are taken from you, and you still have your family, friends and life - then all is good because none of those material things were important; for they can be replaced. Our children cannot be replaced, our family cannot be replaced, and our mountains cannot be replaced.

I am opposed to mountaintop removal mining and valley fills of any kind. How dare our government allow corporations come into our forests, our wilderness' homes and diminish what little natural haven we have left in this world! What we need is an alternative energy policy, not a more consuming energy policy like that of which Bush would like passed. More coal, more oil, more pollution, more chemical agents in the rivers and streams is what is happening with these 'Bush Policies' - don't we have enough polluters already? The fish in the Ohio are already labeled as unhealthy to eat, where we obtain our water - yet more development and energy sources are being planned. If we keep dumping more pollutants into these streams, and adding to the air pollution through coal and oil exploration, then what we have is a future health disaster on our hands. Is that what our government wants to happen to the American people? We already cannot face rising health care costs and our government will not give us national healthcare like the many other industrialized nations of the world.

Therefore, we are looking at disease, deformation, brain dysfunctions, bleak skies and blank futures - all over money and corporate power, because we cannot get enough - if this is allowed to keep happening. It is never enough is it? Tell you what... If you stop the mining, I will talk to the people about being conservative and controlling the population. I personally could care less if we did run out of fuel and energy, because it has caused chaos, war, violence, greed and hate. I do not need any of those effects, nor do our children. If we run out, we run out. Maybe if government concentrated on educating people on the effects they are having on the environment, instead of removing our environment to make more money off people - we would not have these problems. Instead, this could be a letter of appreciation for looking out for our environment and saving it from corporate destruction. I hope that in the near future I will have the opportunity to write such a nice note to you.

Page 1 of 2

JL

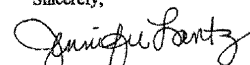
12/28/2003

REC'D JAN 02 2004

Furthermore, I do not support Alternatives #1, 2 or 3 contained within the EIS report. None of these options will protect our water or our communities. The only alternative to protect our water, wilderness and communities is to stop the mining and mountain removal. Enough is enough and the people, environment and future of America have a word on this issue. We have spoken. We hope our government will hear us.

Thank you for your attention. Please read a short summation of sustainability for our future at <http://www.isosconference.org.au/papers/Sanders.pdf>

Sincerely,



Jennifer Lantz
7050 Bronner Circle
Louisville, KY 40218

"Only when the last tree has died and the last river has been poisoned and the last fish has been caught...will we realize that we can not eat money." ~ Native American proverb

1-5

11-9

Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 11:18 AM -----

jennifer.lantz@insightbb.com
To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc:
12/28/2003 09:39 PM
Subject: Just Say No To Mountain Top Removal

John Forren<?xml:namespace prefix = o ns =
"urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />
<?xml:namespace prefix = stl ns =
"urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:smarttags" />U.S. EPA (SES30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

December 28, 2003

Mr. John Forren,

I am writing to you, in defense of our precious environment. I will start by saying I have never written so many environmental defense letters, as I have since Bush, Jr. took office. Daily I find myself wondering why this administration favors corporations over our environment, our future, our children's health and our own. Is money that precious? How precious will it be when all of our natural resources, our clean rivers, our clean air - are gone? I have learned one thing above all else while growing into an adult: Even if all material things are taken from you, and you still have your family, friends and life

- then all is good because none of those material things were important; for they can be replaced. Our children cannot be replaced, our family cannot be replaced, and our mountains cannot be replaced.

I am opposed to mountaintop removal mining and valley fills of any kind. How dare our government allow corporations come into our forests, our wilderness' homes and diminish what little natural haven we have left in this world! What we need is an alternative energy policy, not a more consuming energy policy like that of which Bush would like passed. More coal, more oil, more pollution, more chemical agents in the rivers and streams is what is happening with these 'Bush Policies' - don't we have enough polluters already? The fish in the Ohio are already labeled as unhealthy to eat, where we obtain our water - yet more development and energy sources are being planned. If we keep dumping more pollutants into these streams, and adding to the air pollution through coal and oil exploration, then what we have is a future health disaster on our hands. Is that what our government wants to happen to the American people? We already cannot face rising health care costs and our government will not give us national healthcare like the many other industrialized nations of the world.

Therefore, we are looking at disease, deformation, brain dysfunctions, bleak skies and blank futures - all over money and corporate power, because we cannot get enough - if this is allowed to keep happening. It is never enough is it? Tell you what... If you stop the mining, I will talk to the people about being conservative and controlling the population. I personally could care less if we did run

out of fuel and energy, because it has caused chaos, war, violence, greed and hate. I do not need any of those effects, nor do our children. If we run out, we run out. Maybe if government concentrated on educating people on the effects they are having on the environment, instead of removing our environment to make more money off people - we would not have these problems. Instead, this could be a letter of appreciation for looking out for our environment and saving it from corporate destruction. I hope that in the near future I will have the opportunity to write such a nice note to you.

Furthermore, I do not support Alternatives #1, 2 or 3 contained within the EIS report. None of these options will protect our water or our communities. The only alternative to protect our water, wilderness and communities is to stop the mining and mountain removal. Enough is enough and the people, environment and future of America have a word on this issue. We have spoken. We hope our government will hear us.

Thank you for your attention. Please read a short summation of sustainability for our future at <http://www.isosconference.org.au/papers/Sanders.pdf>

Sincerely,

Jennifer Lantz
7050 Bronner Circle
Louisville, KY 40218

"Only when the last tree has died and the last river has been
poisoned and the last fish has been caught...will we realize that
we can not eat money." ~ Native American proverb

Peace on Earth,
Jennifer Lantz

Does America need a change?
Recycle for a change.
Take action for a change.
Vote Kucinich for a change.
Change only happens thru individual participation.

1-5

1-9

7/24/03

To Whom It May Concern:

Please recognize the fact that there are groups of people today whose sole purpose is to halt all types of mining, by whatever means necessary.

I believe that the current regulations on the mining industry have improved the environment significantly in my lifetime. Significantly additional restrictive regulations would serve to further strangle an already economically weak and vulnerable coal industry in WV.

1-12

The key is to have moderate, incremental regulation, not radical & impractical to implement.

"Don't Kill the goose that is laying the golden egg!"

Thank You!

872-6071

Tim Larrick
Somersville, WV

First Name: Jessica Last Name: Lavin Letter Date: 1/13/2004
City: Harpswell State: ME Zip: 04079

This past November I had the opportunity to attend a week long training session for those who work to create social change. On the 10 hour drive with one of my colleagues we discussed many issues facing our environment today. We talked about the health and air issues associated with US electronic waste being shipped to Asia, we talked about the war in Iraq, about globalization and free trade, but the most interesting thing we talked about was my colleagues work to stop the destructive coal mining practice of mountaintop removal. He told me about living in Appalachia with some families who's health, livelihood, home towns and pristine surroundings were being threatened by coal companies. My reaction -- "Coal companies still do that in the United States!" Of course, my co-worker couldn't believe, I had never heard of such acts. I guess I had been living in my isolated part of the US for way too long. As the week progressed, I met more and more people who worked to improve the lives of others through securing low income housing in the inner cities of Philadelphia, chasing drug dealers and prostitutes of the corners of their streets in Camden New Jersey, fighting AIDS in impoverished countries. And -- still the story that struck my heart was the simple fact that even in the US we still allow coal companies to permanently devastate our people and our environment. The US is one of the most sophisticated countries in the world? At the end of the week the message I took away was there is still opportunities for us to create change in society, it may not happen fast, but if all do our part we can make a difference. It's your turn to do the right thing! Stop allowing coal companies to destroy our nations soil and threaten the health of many people. Instead of allowing mountaintop removal to continue and in many cases increase, implement alternative measures! - You CAN reduce stream and forest loss by placing strong restrictions on the size of valley fills. - You CAN implement measures that require evaluating alternatives for individual projects. - You CAN implement measures that require evaluating regional alternatives so that the cumulative impact of the destruction caused by mountaintop removal is addressed. For the sake of Appalachian men, women and children, their heritage and our environment PLEASE stop this devastating act! Wouldn't Appalachia be a great place for windmills?

1-9

December 18, 2003

John Forren
US Environmental Protection Agency
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA
19103

Dear Mr. Forren,

I oppose any changes that would weaken laws and regulations that protect clean water in the state of West Virginia. I oppose elimination of the stream buffer zone that prohibits mining activity within 100 feet of streams.

1-10

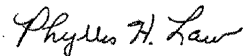
We must adhere to improving environmental protection to aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. We must also eradicate the widespread and irreversible damage the coal industry is doing to Appalachia, and the once beautiful mountains of West Virginia.

9-2-2

The EIS draft must not be approved or accepted.

4-2

Sincerely yours,



Phyllis H. Law
137 Loretta Avenue
Follansbee, WV 26037
304-527-1522

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/07/2004 03:42 PM -----

Carey Lea
<woodsmoke19@yahoo.com>
To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc:
Subject:
12/25/2003 10:27
AM

Dear Mr. Forren

I am writing to tell you that I am opposed to mountaintop removal coal mining. I think the practice and its results speak for themselves-unemployment, environmental destruction, and the destruction of local communities. Of course the industry has its own self-serving rosy scenario, but for those of us who live in the area, the rosy scenario is laughable. I urge you to consider the will of the people, not the industry.

1-9

Sincerely,
F. Carey Lea
353 Groundhog Ridge
Spencer, WV 25276

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 01:59 PM -----

"eleach@brainerd.
net" <eleach
cc:
01/06/2004 03:24 Subject: Please Stop Destructive Mountaintop
Removal Mining
PM

Dear Mr. John Forren, Project Manager,

I have made numerous s trips through Appalachia and have seen the damage to the environment and living conditions caused by harmful coal mining.

Therefore,I strongly urge you to amend the EPA's draft environmental impact statement so as to limit the effects of harmful mountaintop removal mining. I find it unconscionable that the Bush administration plans to continue to let coal companies destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests, bury streams and destroy communities.

The Bush administration must consider alternatives that reduce the environmental impacts of mountaintop removal and then implement measures to protect natural resources and communities in Appalachia.
Sincerely,

Elaine Leach
8175 County 78
Lake Shore, MN 56468
eleach@brainerd.net

DeliveredDate: 01/13/2004 01:52:12 AM

Carole Levenson
492 Staten Avenue #1103
Oakland, CA 94610

January 13, 2004

John Forren
US EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Forren:

Dear Sir,

I think that it is reprehensible that the EPA could even consider that the removal of mountain tops and deposition thereof into stream beds is in any way ecological and not in violation of our existing environmental laws.

Sincerely,

Carole S. Levenson

1-5

1-9

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/07/2004 03:42 PM -----

"textextract@attbi.com" <textextract@attbi.com>
 To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
 cc: 01/06/2004 05:21
 Subject: Please Stop Destructive Mountaintop Removal Mining
 PM

Dear Mr. John Forren, Project Manager,

I am against any more mountaintop mining. It's known that this type of mining--which dumps tons of waste into the valleys below--is destructive.

The EPA should do whatever is in its power, including changing the current draft environmental impact statement, to make clear that mountaintop mining is too harmful to be allowed.

Sincerely,

Igal Levy
 1020 Willow Drive
 Lafayette, CA 94549
 textextract@attbi.com

1-9

853 S. Walnut
 Van Wert, OH 45891
 A note from Mrs. Howard Lewis
 Year Mr. Forren, Dec. 26, 2008

Please do not
 weaken environmental
 protection for the
 devastating practice
 of mountain top mining!
 A strip mining that
 is ugly as the extreme
 as well as destroying
 the valleys and streams
 the rubble is
 dumped into!

Sincerely,
 Elizabeth Lewis
 family and
 friends.



1-10

REC'D JUL 25 2003

Norma Lewis
Lincoln WV 25508
July 20, 2003

January 19, 2004

REC'D JAN 23 2004

U.S. EPA
Attn: John Forren
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear EPA,

The EIS does not evaluate alternatives to valley fills, it should.

11-8

Other uses for the rock need to be considered. Economic development plans should have as a main focus -- how to capitalize on another one of West Virginia's resources-- sandstone. Other parts of the country mine sandstone. Glass manufacturers should be encouraged to build plants where the sandstone has already been mined for them. Block and stone siding companies should be encouraged to build factories in areas where they can use the rocks that otherwise would have turned into valley fill.

10-3-5

The streams and the mountain valley micro habitats are irretrievably lost when valley fills are constructed. This is an irretrievable and irreversible impact. The mitigation should be that the coal companies must develop markets, pay into a fund, or somehow encourage businesses that use the stone (block manufacturers, stone siding companies, manufactured stone products, glass manufacturers). China is a large stone manufacturer. Instead of importing these products from China, the US government should subsidize companies that produce products with coal mining overburden. If there was both a federal subsidy and a coal company fund, then there could be an attractive business opportunity.

9-5-3

Yes, this would require a different type of thinking. It appears to be a radical concept. All industrial innovations seem far- fetched when first proposed. Who would have thought that chemical companies could successfully use product substitution or sell their hazardous waste? It is part of everyday practice now but it was not twenty years ago. Please do not dismiss this concept as a weird public comment. Please try to circulate the idea and see how it could be studied and implemented.



Mr. John Forren
U.S. EPA (3EA30)


Dear Mr. Forren,

Please reduce the harmful effects of mountaintop removal coal mining to protect natural resources and communities and do not weaken environmental protections that apply to the companies that are conducting mountaintop removal.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on mountaintop removal should be rewritten to recommend limits on the size of valley fills that bury streams and imperil wildlife.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement should not do away with a surface mining rule that makes it illegal for mining activities to disturb areas within 100 feet of streams.

Sincerely,


 Tom Lewis
356 Fisher Rd
Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48230

1-10

bettaleyl@excite.
com To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc:
01/05/2004 04:20 Subject: Comments on draft programmatic EIS on
mountaintop removal coal mining
PM

Mr. John Forren
U.S. EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Forren,

I find it unconscionable that the Bush administration plans to continue to let coal companies destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests, bury streams, and destroy communities.

THIS IS A RAPE OF OUR COUNTRY BY THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION.

IT SEEMS THAT EVERYTHING THEY DO IS GEARED TOWARD TURNING THIS COUNTRY INTO A SERFDOM, RULED BY A SELECT FEW.

I HAVE GRANDCHILDREN AND GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN, AND I WILL NOT LET THIS HAPPEN.

Sincerely,

Betta Leyland
65 Franklin Drive
Doylestown
Ohio, Ohio 44230

cc:
Representative Ralph Regula
Senator George Voinovich
Senator Mike DeWine

Mr. John Forren
Project Manager
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

REC'D JAN 05 2004

Subject: Draft EIS on mountaintop removal coal mining

12/31/03

Dear Mr. Forren,

I am writing regarding the EPA's draft environmental impact statement on mountaintop removal mining. From my understanding of this practice and the findings of the draft EIS, I believe that mountaintop removal mining creates unacceptable hazards to human health and the environment.

As such, I do not believe that the Bush administration should advance plans to allow this mining practice, which can level mountaintops, wipe out forests, bury streams and displace communities. Rather, at a minimum, I believe the draft EIS should be strengthened to effect proper restrictions on the size of valley fills and the number of acres of forest that can be destroyed/stripped, and to ensure protection of streams and associated flora and fauna which can be damaged or destroyed by the mountaintop mining removal and fill practice.

I do not favor the Bush administration's "preferred alternative", which actually weakens environmental protections for human health and the environment by allowing mountaintop removal and associated valley fills to continue at an accelerated rate. Please ensure that the Bush administration is held to the high standard they espouse in the popular media, and earnestly and honestly consider (and implement) alternatives that reduce the environmental impacts of mountaintop removal, in a way that protects America's natural resources and the Appalachian communities where this damaging approach to mining is practiced (and proposed to be expanded).

1-9

1-5

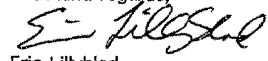
1-10

REC'D DEC 17 2003

Mr. John Forren
U.S. EPA
1650 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Email- mountaintop.r3@epa.gov

Thank you for your time in considering my concerns and the concerns of the American people regarding the sensitive issue of protecting human health and the environment.

With kind regards,


Eric Lillyblad
9505 207th St. N.
Forest Lake, MN 55025-8903
clillyblad@aol.com

I oppose the practice of mountaintop removal mining. This mining is destroying our communities, homes and lives. We are constantly flooded, in homes that we have spent our lives in. We are being pushed out of our homes by the destruction caused by mountaintop removal mining. Our roads are being shut down ever time it rains this makes our rescue personal useless to us. Our tax dollars are what fixes all the mess caused by the mining going on around us. No wonder mining is so profitable we as citizens pick up the bill on the devastation caused by the mine companies. Please stop this insanity its killing out entire communities. Not to mention the effects it's having on our environment. The habitats of our animals are destroyed, running the wildlife away. Our streams are filled with rock that the mine companies pile into these valley fills. The waters get up and have no where to go but into peoples homes. Our mountains are exploding with water. These outbreaks come out into people's yard and underneath their homes. Our homes are literally being blasted off their foundations or the earth is opening up and swallowing them. Please stop the practice of mountaintop removal coal mining and save our homeland, our children's future and very possibly our lives

1-9

Name Ms. Joan V. Linville
Address P.O. Box 143
231 Eastwood Lane
Van, W.V. 25206
Phone (304) 245-8229
Email JV.LINVILLE@KV.NET.COM - NO CAPS

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 11:39 AM -----

"Linville, Joe"
<jlinville@walker
-cat.com> To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc:
Subject: Comment on Mountaintop Mining -- Draft EIS
01/06/2004 03:48
PM

I hope the out come of this process is in the best interest of all the people.

Sincerely,

William J. Linville, II
698 Lick Creek Road

Danville, WV 25053

Greetings,
<?xml:namespace prefix = o ns =
"urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

As a life long resident of southern West Virginia I would like to make a comment regarding the regulations the EPA Draft EIS on mountaintop mining.

Joe Linville
Standard Job Administrator
C.I. Walker Machinery Co.
(304) 949-6400 x2283
jlinville@walker-cat.com

First and foremost, COAL is West Virginia. Without COAL, the State of West Virginia would be economically depressed.

11-4-2

The good Lord above has provided us with an abundance of natural resources and he has blessed our region with COAL, so therefore I feel we can find a happy medium for all parties involved.

COAL is very vital and I am wondering if you can put a price tag on the economic impact this natural resource has on our state. The coal industry employees thousands of men and women in our state and what would happen to those jobs if stringent regulations were put into place, that forced mining companies out of business? Not only would miners loose their jobs, but the thousands of support jobs as well.

11-1-2

Bottom line I feel with good regulations, coal companies can mine the coal effectively and feasibly, provide West Virginian's with good paying jobs, provide a good tax base for the state and continue to help balance the environment.

I feel reclamation is a major factor in this equation. I have had the opportunity to see first hand many 'mountaintop removal' mine sites, before, during and after the fact. Yes, there is no doubt that during the mining process, the land is not one of the prettiest sights, but neither is the construction of a local highway or a neighborhood shopping mall. However the finished product is different story.

19-1-2

10:11 PM John Foran,
To whom I told May, Barrett's
I am a resident of Van,
Barnes County, WI, and I oppose
mountain top removal.
Mr. Foran, (6/2003, after)
many years the mountain (which
my spouse died in 1999, the
which a full century ago) used
much to come in (working
mud and water on the inside of
my blood to push
down, helped with the repair
of cleaning up and having someone
to do some excavating the
problem occurred again in Nov.
1999 and again in the 1990s.
I have also seen a lot of water
that has under my days (evening
down) (which is a beautiful
to my health due to water
and better respiratory problems).
After several years I am
now having to pay out of my

1-9

17-2-2

17-2-2

Low income! Please you clean up
and repair!
After I go to bed at night -
I don't know what I will wake up!
to see if I'll ever, because if
it all slides in again. Even if
I have my home I always feel
that the hill will come and my
home will be destroyed.
I've lived long now! 55 years
and have never had this problem
with the hillside sliding in.
Something needs to be done!
to stop these problems.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Nannie Linville
JNL

REC'D DEC 11 2003

CURT A. LIVINGSTON, SR.
~~PHILADELPHIA, PA.~~ P.O. Box 1503
DENNISPORT, MA 01939

12/18/03

Mr. John Foran
U.S. EPA (3EA 30)
1450 Arch St.
Philadelphia, Pa. 19103

REC'D DEC 24 2003

Dear Mr. Foran:

This is to express my deep concern for the
practice of mountain top removal to access coal
in the Appalachian Mountains. The long awaited
release (May 29, 2003) of the Environmental Impact
Statement (EIS) does not adequately address how to
reduce the environmental harm done to the nation
or water quality degradation cause by the action.

Please do not weaken the environmental
regulations for this devastating activity. These
regulations have withstood the test of time.
These were beautiful areas.

Sincerely,
Curt A. Livingston, Sr.

4-2

1-10

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/09/2004 02:49 PM -----

jlp
<jlp@smgazette.co To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
m> cc:
Subject: Mountaintop removal for coal mining
12/30/2003 07:26
PM

Mr. John Forren
Project Manager
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Email: mountaintop.r3@epa.gov
Dear Mr. Forren,

I understand that the EPA's draft environmental impact statement proposes no restrictions on the size of valley fills that bury streams, no limits on the number of acres of forest that can be destroyed, no protections for imperiled wildlife and no safeguards for the communities that depend on the region's natural resources for themselves and future generations. Yet according to the draft EIS the Bush administration has released, the environmental effects of mountaintop removal are widespread, devastating and permanent. The social effects to the people and their communities are also negative, particularly in the long term.

According to the information I have read President Bush's administration will ignore their own studies and propose weakening existing environmental protections and allowing mountaintop removal and associated valley fills to continue. Alternatives that reduce the environmental impacts of mountaintop removal would seem to make more sense for the future of the human and wildlife communities of Appalachia, the companies that harvest this natural resource, and the American people. For these reasons I would urge you to consider amending the draft EIS with proposals for restricting the negative impacts of this type of mining.

Sincerely,

Julie Longman-Pollard
PO Box 577
St. Maries, ID 83861
jlp@smgazette.com

Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 08/28/03 05:06 PM -----

Sherry Lorenz
<sherlorenz@fmc. To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
net> cc:
Subject: WVA Mountaintop Removals...
08/24/03 06:36 PM

August 24, 2003

To: The EPA, Region 3
From: Sherry Lorenz, Fort Mill, South Carolina

My name is Sherry Lorenz, I live in Fort Mill, South Carolina, and I am a member of the Henry's Knob Group of the Sierra Club in Rock Hill, SC. I am an avid hiker/backpacker and outdoors enthusiast. I feel best when seeing and hearing the sounds of nature, it is a wonderful respite from the everyday noises and pressures of life, the honking of cars, non-stop music in the stores, telephones, beepers, shrieking ambulances and police cruisers, and many other noise-nuisances that disrupt and burden our daily lives. What more beautiful is there than being able to take a break in the wings of nature and "recuperate" so that we can all take on another week of stress and hardship. However, in *YOUR* State, the State of West Virginia, this birthright is being taken away from its people. They are being terrorized by these horrible mountaintop removals, a practice that is unspeakable to say the least. I have seen pictures and have talked to people who live this nightmare day-in and day-out, people who see nothing but dust when they step out of their homes and look around, total utter destruction and mayhem. You know as well as I know, that many have died as a result of mudslides that are a part of mountaintop removals, many have lost their homes due to damage from the blastings, many were forced to sell their properties for almost nothing, many simply have no place to go and suffer silently, and many have developed health problems they would never have had before these removals started. Yes, I know, I have spoken to people that live in Bob White, WVA and Dorothy, WVA. And yes again, I am aware that the blastings and dumpings known as "valley fill" occurs on private

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coal company land, however, the results extend far beyond it's borders, destroying communities along with the environment. It is nothing but a living nightmare. Already, more than 1,200 miles of headwater streams have been directly impacted by mountaintop removal operations, and 724 of streams have been buried. More than 300,000 acres of hardwood forest have been removed, many of them just buried along with the rock and fill. It's a total environmental disaster. I don't even live in West Virginia, but I am horrified and feel the pain of the people that have to deal with this. I so respect what God has given us to protect, enjoy and cherish, I treat nature like it was a fragile flower. Which it is. We all know that the Bush Administration is promoting and allowing this, however, common sense will tell us that this practice of MTR is totally unacceptable. Is our land free game for just a few of the rich and powerful? Is this democracy? Is this in the best interests of the land and of the people? I know "you" know the answer to this. I am therefore kindly asking you to HELP STOP this insanity. I will be traveling to Bob White, WVA, soon to take pictures of the mined areas and I'll be showing them to my fellow environmentalists here in Rock Hill. I know they will be shocked.

I hope to hear from you, I would like a response---a response that makes sense and will give hope to me and the people of West Virginia and the surrounding states. I care about our Planet, I care about the future of my children and grandchildren, and what they will inherit, and I also care about the people of West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky and other places that are being destructed. Let us all do what's right.

Sincerely yours,
Sherry Lorenz

1-9

Sherry Lorenz
Mountaintop@EPA
net>
Virginia Mountaintop Removals
10/22/03 11:04 AM

<sherlorenz@fmc.net>
cc:
Subject: Re: West

Dear EPA, Region 3,

I appreciate your reply, I ****needed**** to hear from you. When we don't receive a reply from someone we wrote, we all feel like our voice didn't matter after all. I ****want**** to be heard, because ****I CARE**** about our Planet.

Please let me leave you with this:

"Only after the last tree has been cut down,
Only after the last river has been poisoned,
Only after the last fish has been caught,
Only then will you find that money cannot be Eaten."

Cree

Indian
Prophecy
----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 10/24/03 08:33 AM -----

R3 Mountaintop
Sent by: David
<sherlorenz@fmc.net>
Rider
Forren/R3/USEPA/US@EPA
Virginia Mountaintop Removals(Document link: R3 Mountaintop)

To: Sherry Lorenz
cc: John
Subject: Re: West

10/22/03 08:31 AM

Dear Ms. Lorenz:

We very much appreciate your comments on the MTM DEIS. The comment period is still open and will close on January 6, 2004. We plan to respond to comments after the close of the comment period and during the preparation of the Final EIS. Responses to comments, including yours, will be released to the public as part of this Final EIS. Given the many hundreds of comments we have received thus far, and the many thousands we expect to receive before the end of the comment period, we will be responding categorically to all comments we receive on the Draft EIS.

3-3

Again, thank you for your comments. Please continue to check the MTM website for updates on the schedule for release of the Final EIS. We appreciate your patience as we continue to work on this difficult issue.

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 10/24/03 08:30 AM -----

Sherry Lorenz
 <sherilorenz@fatec.net>
 Mountaintop@EPA
 Mountaintop Removals
 10/17/03 03:28 PM

To: R3
 CC:
 Subject: West Virginia

October 17, 2003

To: The EPA, Region 3
 From: Sherry Lorenz, Fort Mill, South Carolina

To Whom It May Concern At the EPA:

I wrote you a lengthy e-mail on my concerns about MTR in WV, on August 24th, 2003. I had kindly asked for a reply. Now 2 months later, I still haven't heard anything from you at all. I don't understand. I believe we all deserve to be acknowledged in whatever form or fashion, and I am deeply disappointed. Would you please inform me why I haven't been given a reply?
 Thank you.

Sincerely,
 Sherry Lorenz

3-2

Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 01:58 PM -----

dbi456@earthlink.net
 To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
 CC:
 12/17/2003 03:40 PM
 Subject: Comments on draft programmatic EIS on mountaintop removal coal mining

Mr. John Forren
 U.S. EPA (3EA30)
 1650 Arch Street
 Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Forren,

I find it unconscionable that the Bush administration plans to continue to let coal companies destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests, bury streams, and destroy communities.

PLEASE CONSIDER LIMITING YOUR PLAN TO ONLY, SAY, 30% OF THE MOUNTAINS THAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE DESTROYED.

The Bush administration really must consider alternatives that reduce the environmental impacts of mountaintop removal.

Sincerely,

David and Marsha Low
 8018 Hammond Road
 Cheltenham, Pennsylvania 19012

cc:
 Senator Arien Specter
 Senator Rick Santorum
 Representative Chaka Fattah

1-9

1-8

Dear Mr. Forren,

I am writing in regard to the public comments accepted for the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impacts Statement on Mountaintop Mining/Valley Fills in Appalachia. I am a professional biologist by vocation; therefore, my comments will be restricted to those areas in which I am inherently familiar. I will attempt to be succinct in my points of criticism; however, the breadth of the inadequacies of this report far exceeds the potential for a single, thorough evaluation by any one individual.

First, I must bring to surface the fact that many of the leading regional experts in the fields of science in which this study focused were not selected to participate. These experts, particularly those in academia, neither conducted the field research nor interpreted the data collected; consequently, a study not completed by the preeminent experts will always be subject to scrutiny. It seems counterintuitive that a study of this magnitude, upon which so much emphasis has been placed, would fail to incorporate these individuals, many of whom have devoted a lifetime of study on the topics dealt with in this document.

I also have deep concerns with the language used in many portions of the scientific analyses and conclusions. For example, the loss of habitat to organisms that specialize in and require such habitat to complete critical portions of life history will most certainly be impacted by the proposed action. In this document, many habitat specialists were considered to be "possibly" affected, or "may be" detrimentally influenced by an action which will most certainly lead to population declines. Again, the scientific personnel must be both confident and competent in order to make such assertions, but in this case, they were neither.

The study fails to consider the potential problems associated with large-scale land disturbance and the encroachment of exotic and invasive species. In the realm of vegetation alone, the potential for colonization of reclaimed mine sites by aggressive nuisance species is extremely high. The establishment of such species (e.g. *Ailanthus altissima*) in large monocultures will not only cost taxpayers millions of dollars to control but also stands to threaten the timber industry as a whole. Furthermore, species that are rarely encountered in the region due to range restrictions cannot be considered as rare in regard to global, national, or state status. If this were the case, nuisance species such as *Passer domesticus* would have once been considered rare under this convention.

In conclusion, this study is incomplete. It is strong on implications and conclusions that are not supported by the research conducted in this study or documented in the scientific literature. It is a perversion of true science, in which facts are established based on observations leading to expertise—this study is vacant in both.

Respectfully yours,

Benjamin M. Lowman

Mr. John Forren, US EPA
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130

REC'D AUG 20 2003

Dear Mr. Forren,

I am writing to comment on the EIS on Mountaintop Removal. Scientific proof confirms the knowledge of local residents that mountaintop removal/valley fill coal mining is irreversibly and substantially harming the forests and streams of West Virginia and Kentucky.

1-9

Throughout central Appalachia, some of the most productive and diverse temperate hardwood forests in the world have been destroyed when coal companies blast off hundreds of feet of mountaintops to get thin seams of coal. In most circumstances, the former lush forests will remain degraded as grassy, unproductive scrubland for at least several centuries. These unproductive grasslands cover nearly 20% of some southern West Virginia counties.

7-5-2

Millions of tons of rubble from the former mountains are pushed into the adjacent valleys. Coal companies have already buried hundreds of miles of Appalachian streams, destroying not only the streams themselves, but creating disastrous impacts to downstream waterways and towns. As residents point out, mountaintop removal is also devastating the culture and communities of the region.

5-7-2

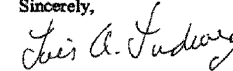
10-2-2

Despite all this evidence of harm, the EIS draft does not recommend curbing the environmental harm caused by mountaintop removal, but asks the agencies that are supposed to be regulating coal mining to streamline the way they work together.

I love our West Virginia mountains and spend a lot of time hiking, biking, bird watching, photographing, and enjoying the beauty of our special state. I am very concerned for my children and grandchildren who will have much less space to recreate and recuperate. In a world of ever increasing stress, these mountains and streams are all the more necessary for daily renewal of the spirit, not to mention life-sustaining water without which there can be no life.

I believe the EIS should show the real impacts of mountaintop removal and offer real solutions, not push forward a harmful agenda of destruction.

Sincerely,



Lois A Ludwig

9-2-2

18-2-2

4-2

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 01:59 PM -----

"luthert@asme.org
" <luthert To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA

cc:

01/06/2004 02:57 Subject: Please Stop Destructive Mountaintop

Removal Mining
PM

Dear Mr. John Forren, Project Manager,

I have no inherent conflicts with mountaintop removal mining.

I do think that an environmental bond or severance tax should be paid and held in trust for at least 50 years to help address any future problems that may develop.

As we gain experience with the method, future costs and consequences will be better estimated. Such a bond could easily be structured for trading on an exchange.

This way, money will be available to address future concerns and the land will not be abandoned. In addition, difficult to assess environment issues will eventually develop a cost basis, making feasibility assessments of this mining technology more accurate.

Give the process an economic basis, and I am in favor.

Sincerely,

tom luther
411 cutler street
Raleigh, NC 27603-1921
luthert@asme.org

REC'D JAN 02 2004

Grace and Thomas Lynch
PO Box 114
Rock Cave, WV 26234

December 30, 2003

Mr. John Forren, US EPA
1650 Arch St
Philadelphia, PA 19103

We are writing to comment on the Mountaintop Mining/Valley Fills in Appalachia Draft EIS. The reported evidence shows that the practice of Mountaintop removal mining creates devastating environmental damage. Yet the draft EIS discusses "unavoidable impacts from MTM/VF projects" (IV B-9). Why not consider limiting the practice to a scale of operation that allows for adequate reclamation? It is Mountaintop Mining that has led to fewer coal-related jobs and greater irreversible damage to communities and the environment. And in talking about long-term consequences, the study notes that "with sufficient time, although it may take hundreds of years, natural processes for mine soil improvement and succession can overcome conditions limiting reforestation, and the resource loss is not irreversible" (IV A-4). Hundreds of years? Geologic time should not be applied here. Some of the effects of nuclear war are mitigated over hundreds of years, but war is still unacceptable. Government should work for the people now, with regulations that protect our environment and safeguard our future.

What of the economic impact of MTM/VF? The travel and tourism industry in WV, which depends on the state retaining and protecting its natural beauty, provides more jobs than do "extractive industries" (Charleston Gazette December 8, 2003). In addition to direct employment there are many people that benefit from travel and tourism, such as those involved in the arts, entertainment and the businesses involved in building and maintaining second homes. The conditions that promote tourism are negated by the realities of Mountain Top Removal mining. The draft EIS reports negative impacts yet recommends streamlining the permitting process rather than setting reasonable limits to the mining practice.

We own a chairmaking business that uses WV hardwoods. We have supported ourselves and raised a family by responsibly harvesting maple, hickory, cherry, oak and walnut, turning these native trees into "value added" furniture. We depend on tourism to market our products within the state. And we are depending on the regulatory agencies to recognize that protecting our environment is its immediate responsibility.

Sincerely,

Grace Glaser-Lynch
Thomas Lynch

Grace Glaser-Lynch
Thomas Lynch

1-9

11-7-2

11-8-2

--- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 01:58 PM ----

Ann Lynnworth
<ann@sonic.net> To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc: 12/30/2003 05:12 Subject: Strengthen draft EIS on mountaintop removal coal
mining PM

December 30, 2003

Mr. John Forren
Project Manager
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Forren,

I strongly urge you to amend the EPA's draft environmental impact statement so as to limit the effects of devastating mountaintop removal mining

Sincerely,

Ann Lynnworth
241 Main Street
Littleton, NH 03574
USA

1-9

REC'D JAN 05 2004

January 2, 2004
Lawrence B. Lyon, Jr.
114 Center Street
Madison, West Virginia 25130
(304)369-2131

Mr. John Forren
U. S. E.P.A.
(3 EA 30) 1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

Dear Sir:

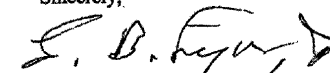
I could show you land that was surface mined fifty years ago. I would have to show it to you because it is covered with trees.

The reason so many people get flooded in West Virginia is because of the contour of the land. Too many people live at the bottom of the drain. They need to move to higher ground.

When the State Road Commission or a shopping mall fills a valley no one objects. When a coal company plans to fill a valley there are many objections. Water will find its level regardless of valley fill.

America is too dependent on foreign energy and West Virginia needs level ground for housing and industry above the flood plain.

Sincerely,



Lawrence B. Lyon, Jr.

1-11

Malcolm R. MacPherson, Ph.D.

Mr. John Forren EPA
U.S. EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103

January 2, 2004

Dear Mr. Forren:

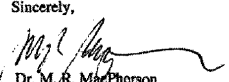
It has come to my attention that the EPA is proposing rule changes governing mountaintop removal for mining in Appalachia. This practice has buried whole valleys with tailings and other debris. It has inundated streams, wiped out forests, polluted water supplies, destroyed wildlife habitat, and negatively altered nearby communities. These mining practices are unethical and unprincipled.

We must have laws and regulations that protect clean water. We need to strengthen protections for rural people and the environment. The federal government has ignored its own studies in this regard. It is time for sanity in mining practices.

Therefore, I oppose all three alternatives listed in the Environmental Impact Statement Report. I further oppose the proposal to change the stream buffer zone rule that prohibits mining activity within 100 feet of streams. This rule should be strictly enforced for any mining activity.

Thank you for hearing my concerns.

Sincerely,


Dr. M. R. MacPherson
34 Coyote Mountain Rd
Santa Fe, NM 87505-8178

34 Coyote Mountain Road
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Phone: 505-989-9502
Fax: 505-989-8699

REC'D JAN 09 2004

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Jan 3, 2004

x44

Mr. John Forren
U.S. EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103

REC'D JAN 09 2004

Dear Mr. Forren:

Having witnessed first-hand the abomination euphemistically referred to as mountaintop removal, I consider it to be the most destructive peacetime activity in human history. Were this level of destruction perpetrated against our country the work of a foreign power, it would be considered an ACT OF WAR. It is a desecration, a tragedy and an outrage. I am disgusted, but not surprised to learn that the Bush administration plans to continue to let coal companies wage war on Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests, bury streams, and destroy communities.

According to the administration's draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on mountaintop removal coal mining, the environmental effects of mountaintop removal are widespread, devastating, and permanent. Yet the draft EIS proposes no restrictions on the size of valley fills that bury streams, no limits on the number of acres of forest that can be destroyed, no protections for imperiled wildlife, and no safeguards for the communities of people that depend on the region's natural resources for themselves and future generations.

The lush Appalachian forests that are being destroyed are representative of the mixed mesophytic forest, first described by pioneering forest ecologist E. Lucy Braun. The mixed mesophytic is the oldest and most biologically diverse hardwood forest in North America and one of the two most biologically diverse temperate forests on Earth. World Wildlife Fund says this area is a biodiversity hotspot that, if saved, will go far in protecting the vast variety of life on Earth. These forests provide habitat and breeding grounds for an incredible wealth of plant and animal life, including a melodious array of fitting, colorful neotropical migrant birds.

These verdant forests, sheltering mountains and stream-fed valleys have nurtured Appalachian culture for over 200 years, and before that were the hunting grounds of native peoples. They are our national natural heritage and must be protected for the abundance they provide if allowed to function as they have for thousands of years. Instead, in West Virginia alone, at least 500 square miles of our temperate forests, home to so much diversity and beauty, have been permanently annihilated. Coal companies have forever buried over 1,200 miles of biologically crucial Appalachian headwaters streams.

The blasting has ruined homes and water wells, as well as people's nerves. "Fly rock," more aptly named fly boulder, can rain off mountains, endangering resident's lives and homes. Hundreds of folk and entire communities are being displaced as homes get in the way of the 20-story-high draglines. Heavy rains

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can gush off the clearcut, compacted MTR sites, flooding the communities below. Coal trucks overloaded with twice the legal weight-limits are out of control, killing people and tearing up roads and bridges which taxpayers have to pay to fix.

Mountaintop removal generates huge amounts of waste. While the solid waste becomes valley fills, liquid waste is stored in massive, dangerous coal slurry impoundments, often built in the headwaters of a watershed. The slurry is a witch's brew of water used to wash the coal for market, carcinogenic chemicals used in the washing process and coal fines (small particles) laden with all the compounds found in coal, including toxic heavy metals such as arsenic and mercury. Frequent blackwater spills from these impoundments choke the life out of streams. One "spill" of 306 million gallons that sent sludge up to fifteen feet thick into resident's yards and fouled 75 miles of waterways, has been called the southeast's worst environmental disaster.

Tragically, disgustingly, the Bush administration's "preferred alternative" for addressing the problems caused by mountaintop removal coal mining is to weaken existing environmental protections. This "preferred alternative" ignores the administration's own studies detailing the devastation caused by mountaintop removal coal mining, including:

- over 1200 miles of streams have been damaged or destroyed by mountaintop removal;
- forest losses in West Virginia have the potential of directly impacting as many as 244 vertebrate wildlife species;
- Without new limits on mountaintop removal, an additional 350 square miles of mountains, streams, and forests will be flattened and destroyed by mountaintop removal mining.

In light of these facts, we urge you to completely ban this hideously destructive outrage called mountaintop removal. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Andy Mahler
Linda Lee
Tom Moore
Anthony Bloncin
Meredith Jabis
Erik Vilk
3875 Sout County Road 50 West
Possum Ridge
Paoli Indiana 47454

1-9

REC'D JAN 0 2 2004

December 30, 2003
(page 1 of 2, Craig Mains)

John Forren
U.S. EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Forren:

I am writing to comment on the Draft EIS on Mountaintop Mining. I have a number of concerns about the environmental affects of mountaintop mining. However, my primary concern centers on the direct loss of streams. I do not believe there is any argument or rationale that can effectively justify burying streams.

The scientific section of the EIS provides quite a bit of information on the value of headwater streams and the diversity and unique assemblage of species found in the draft EIS study area. The draft EIS states that "many biologists agree that the presence of a biotic community with such unique and rare populations should be considered a critical resource." Additional information describes the area as having possibly the richest salamander fauna in the world. Obviously, these populations, which utilize headwater streams, are eliminated when headwater streams are filled.

In terms of biological function, headwater streams are akin to root hairs on a plant. How many roots hairs can be damaged before a plant dies? When we eliminate headwater streams we affect the overall function of the river system. There has to be a limit to how many streams we can sacrifice. I would suggest that we have already sacrificed more than enough.

Unfortunately, it seems that, while the draft EIS acknowledges the biological richness of the central Appalachians and the damage (both known and potential) to the environment caused by mountaintop mining, the prescribed alternatives do little to protect the environment. This is because they fail to adequately address the glaringly central problem of direct stream loss due to valley fills.

Mr. Forren, I live in north-central West Virginia. While surface mining is present in my area, very little of it would qualify as mountaintop mining. What we do have, however, are hundreds of stream miles that are, for all practical purposes, biologically dead due to acid mine drainage. Every day when I drive by orange streams I am reminded of the permanently damaged environment I live in. Many citizens groups, private industry, and state and federal agencies are now engaged in efforts to rehabilitate these streams. We are finding that it is very expensive and the efforts are almost always less than what was hoped for. I consistently hear people justify the destruction of these streams by saying that it happened during an earlier era when people didn't value the environment as much

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REC'D JAN 0 2 2004

(page 2 of 2, Craig Mains)

or that much of the destruction was an unpleasant, but necessary by-product of the World War I and II efforts.

Mountaintop mining is a continuation of the same type of disregard for the environment that left us with hundreds of miles of dead streams in north-central West Virginia. The difference is that by now we should know better and that we cannot use the convenient excuse of it being a war sacrifice. Another important difference is that burying streams is permanent. We can always hold out hope that acid mine drainage streams will someday be able to be truly restored since they at least still physically exist. There is no hope that a stream will some day be restored once it is buried under thousands of tons of fill.

I encourage you to amend the draft EIS to include an option that allows for no valley fills. I believe that some day the technology will exist to mine the coal without removing mountain tops and without burying streams. It will be a shame and a tragedy if, when that day comes, we have irreversibly filled in thousands of more miles of living streams. We have killed enough streams in Appalachia with acid mine drainage. Let's not bury what's left.

Sincerely,



Craig Mains
137 Hoffman Ave.
Morgantown, WV 26505

1-9

1-8

30 December 2003
The Group of Seven

Lawren Harris (1895-1970)
Mount LeMay, 1930
Oil on canvas
133.5 x 153.5 cm (52 1/2 x 60 3/4 in.)
Purchase 1975
1975.7

Re: Strongman
Draft EIS
mountain top removal



Dear Mr. Foran,
Surely you can do
something to stop the
destructive & devastating
practice of ripping up
our precious Earth!
Please consider alternatives
that protect streams,
valleys, & forests.
Thank you!

O. MANDRUSSOW

REC'D JAN 0 7 2004

Mr. John Foran
Project Manager
USEPA (3 EA30)
1650 Arch St
Philadelphia PA 19103

1-9

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 01:43 PM -----

Carli Mareneck
<cmareneckd@plane To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
twv.com> cc:
Subject: E.I.S. comments
01/06/2004 01:06
PM

Attention: Mr. John Forren- U.S. EPA

This is the final day for commentary on the Environmental Impact Statement regarding mountaintop removal. My last minute comments come not out of not out of negligence but rather the difficulty of facing such grim facts and the irresponsible behavior that leads to them.

It is my understanding that the purpose of the E.I.S. is to evaluate options for IMPROVING agency programs that would contribute to REDUCING the adverse environmental impacts of mountaintop removal mining.

The E.I.S. clearly states that there has already been devastating impact from mountaintop removal including destruction of almost 7% of our region's forests and 1,200 miles of pristine headwater streams now buried under fill from mining.

The "preferred alternative" suggested within the E.I.S. is simply a travesty. Rather than protecting or reducing the irrevocable impacts of MTR this "alternative will plainly make it easier for coal companies to get mining permits by eliminating the buffer zone rule and changing the current limit on nationwide permits.

I honestly don't understand how those responsible for this sham can live with your consciences. You are paid by our tax dollars for the express purpose in your agency name: Environmental PROTECTION Agency yet you spend your waking hours dismantling the laws for protecting the environment. It is a disgrace. The agency should be called Environmental Pollution Agency. It is ironic that citizens must do private funds to litigate against agencies supported with our tax dollars to uphold laws you are hired to uphold for us.

The other irony is that it makes no sense. The coal achieved through these methods will not solve the long term needs for power and the damage is irrevocable. In West Virginia, our pristine water and scenic beauty are our strongest asset for development of tourism and a strong economy. Your agency should be working on alternative

energy development not colluding with old king coal. For shame on your sham. It would be instructive if it were your home which would fall to ruin under the blastin. Only then might you act to protect these lands from wanton and unnecessary destruction.

Sincerely, Carli Mareneck

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----- Forwarded by John Forren/R3/USEPA/US on 11/24/03 10:27 PM -----
Marjayrog@aol.com
Forren/R3/USEPA/US@EPA 11/24/03 03:55 PM
Mining
To: John
cc:
Subject: Mountaintop

DeliveredDate: 01/06/2004 07:35:02 PM

Attention Mr. John Forren / US EPA:

When you are considering our citizen input on the wanton destruction called Mountaintop Removal Mining, please act as if it is your family's home that is being rattled apart; as if it is your mother's gravesite that is being buried forever; your lifetime of hard work and dedication that is being leveled.

This activity is nothing less than rape. If you and your agency condones and permits this atrocity to the lives and properties of your fellow Americans, you might as well be condoning and permitting the rape of our daughters. You have the power & responsibility to stop this horror, Mr. Forren. We're counting on you to listen to your conscience and stand up to end this brutal and selfish nightmare.

Sincerely, P.A. Mareneck Sweet Springs, WV

Please know that our church has a partner parish church in Appalachia, and so we have a special interest in the people. Please do everything you can to protect Appalachian streams and rivers from mountaintop mining pollution. It is a disgrace that mining companies can so easily remove a whole mountaintop to get at the coal and then dump the debris into Appalachian waters. Thank you for anything you can do to support the legislation now under consideration to stop this practice.

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----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/07/2004 03:42 PM -----

"tom@bloomingfun.
com" <tom To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc:
01/06/2004 01:18 Subject: Please Stop Destructive Mountaintop Removal
Mining PM

Dear Mr. John Forren, Project Manager,

Oh, never mind. Go ahead and trash the eco-system for the short term enrichment of your friends, at the expense of future generations. You've obviously got the connections, so you must be entitled.

Patriotically yours,

Thomas Marshalek
1001 Briarcliff Drive
Bloomington, IN 47404
tom@bloomingfun.com

1-9

Forestry chief resigns over mining
Nov. 1, 1998 Charleston Gazette

State Forestry Director Bill Maxey said he was pressured by the Underwood administration into downplaying his opposition to mountaintop removal mining.

By Jennifer Bundy

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Division of Forestry Director Bill Maxey says he is retiring because the Underwood administration tried to stifle his opposition to mountaintop removal strip mining, which he calls a blight akin to AIDS.

Underwood aides forced him to issue a statement toning down his position, Maxey says. And the Division of Environmental Protection and federal Office of Surface Mining tried to get him to approve regulations that would justify blasting the tops off mountains to get at coal seams, leaving flat, treeless expanses and valleys filled with debris.

Administration and agency officials deny the allegations. Maxey, whose resignation was effective Saturday, also says he quit because Underwood's two-year delay in reappointing him was a "sort of a slap in the face."

"For two years I sat there not knowing if I was going to have a job or not. That poisoned me on the job," Maxey says. The delay made him reluctant to voice his opinion on mountaintop removal, which Underwood supports, fearing he would be fired.

Maxey, who has held the post since 1993, was reappointed by Underwood on Aug. 24 and confirmed by the Senate on Oct. 20.

"I think mountaintop removal is analogous to serious disease, like AIDS," says Maxey, who has been an opponent of surface mining since before the Federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977.

He spoke against the act to a congressional subcommittee while he was a tenured associate professor of forest

management at West Virginia University, where he taught for 11 years. Maxey also has worked 15 years as a forester for Westvaco Corp. and seven years for Georgia Pacific. Although the law requires mined land to be reclaimed for an equal or greater use than its pre-mining use, most becomes grassland, not a timber-rich forest, Maxey says. And procedures that could make the land good for trees are not being widely used, he says.

Timber is the only renewable natural resource and the industry employs more than 30,000 people, Maxey says. By comparison, the coal industry employs about 18,000, including about 4,400 at surface mines, according to the West Virginia Coal Association.

Maxey also says that Underwood has never consulted him on forestry issues during the governor's two-year tenure. "For 44 years I went to work with enthusiasm. I couldn't wait to get to work. The last two years I had to force myself," says Maxey, 64.

The only contact he had with Underwood's office was at Secretary of State Ken Hechler, an opponent of mountaintop removal, quoted Maxey as saying the practice had "destroyed 250,000 acres of forest."

Two Underwood aides called him and ordered him to issue a rebuttal, Maxey says. Instead, he put out a statement saying 300,000 acres of forest had been "disturbed."

"I had to, against my will, really, say that it could be properly reforested. ... That isn't what I really wanted to say. That's what I was told to say," Maxey says.

"Absolutely untrue," says Underwood spokesman Dan Page, one of the two aides Maxey says pressured him. Page says he called Maxey to see if Hechler had quoted him correctly.

He and Jimmy Wedge, who says he called Maxey on an unrelated matter, say they suggested Maxey clarify his position if he believed Hechler had misrepresented it.

"I've never ordered anybody to do anything against his

will and wouldn't," Page said.

Maxey would not have been fired for publicly opposing mountaintop removal, he said. Neither he nor Wedge knew why it took Underwood so long to reappoint Maxey.

If he could not live with the Underwood administration's opinion on mountaintop removal, "Why did he take the job?" Wedge asked.

Maxey also says he was pressured by the state DEP and the federal OSM to approve a phrase Maxey says would justify leveling mountains. The agencies wanted the phrase to be included in specifications written by the Division of Forestry for voluntary reclamation of mines into woodlands.

The phrase, which is in 1997 state surface mining regulations, says flat or gently rolling land on a site reclaimed to woodland is "essential for the operation of mechanical harvesting equipment."

Maxey says the idea that timber can be cut only on flat land is ridiculous because loggers have used automated equipment on West Virginia's hills for decades.

John Ailes, chief of the DEP's Office of Mining and Reclamation, says someone in his office may have asked Maxey to include the phrase only to emphasize the existing law.

"We want to try to get more reforestation. That's important," Ailes says. "I don't understand where he's coming from at all."

Dennis Boyles, regulatory programs specialist at the OSM's Charleston office, denied his agency pressured Maxey. Boyles says the phrase refers to an exception to the 1977 law that requires mountaintop removal mines to be reclaimed to their "approximate original contour."

Coal operators do not have to do that if they prove the site can be logged only with equipment that cannot be used on hills.

Maxey says few mines are reclaimed to their "approximate original contour."

Also, most mines strip topsoil and do not replace it, Maxey

says. The soil that is returned is covered with lime and hydroseeded with grasses, which makes the ground too alkaline for trees.

"In other words, our valuable hardwood forest is lost for the next 150 to 200 years," Maxey says.

Coal companies also compact the soil. "Then you are trying to plant a tree in concrete. It doesn't work," Maxey says. If coal companies returned the topsoil, including several feet of weathered sandstone that was not compacted or leveled, the land would immediately be ready for seedlings, Maxey says. "If we can't get it stopped, this is the next best thing, a last resort. We need to stop mountaintop removal," Maxey says.

MOUNTAINTOP REMOVAL HURTS STATE'S PAST AND ITS FUTURE MAN ON THE MOONSCAPE

THE CHARLESTON GAZETTE 01/28/2000

By WILLIAM MAXEY

As director of West Virginia's Division of Forestry, it was 1996 before I fully realized the magnitude and permanent elimination of West Virginia's forestland in the southern and central coalfields by mountaintop removal of coal. A helicopter tour of these areas and the results of an updated forest inventory disclosed not only the size and rate of deforestation, but the loss of West Virginia's mountain culture.

Since the federal Surface Mining Act of 1977 was enacted, all of West Virginia's governors and legislators of both parties have been very supportive of the illegal variances in this law that allowed mountaintop removal of coal. I served at the pleasure of governors of both parties from 1993 to 1998.

I wish to make it clear that while I was head of the Forestry Division I attempted to work within the system to encourage the West Virginia Mining and Reclamation Association and the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection to prevent further devastation. The only concession was to make my professional proposals an option, as opposed to mandatory.

Mountaintop removal has already caused long-term problems and until Judge Charles Haden's II ruling, the rate was increasing. I resigned as a matter of principle, for I did not want to share in the blame nor guilt for the loss of West Virginia's heritage through the loss of our forested mountains.

In West Virginia, from 1977 to 1997, 300,000 acres were made into a moonscape by the decapitation of our mountains. Vast areas of our Mountain State are made uninhabitable for our citizens.

The rate of decapitation of our mountains had increased to 30,000 acres annually. It will take 150 to 200 years before trees would become re-established following such a drastic

mining practice.

All native plant and animals are practically eliminated (not to mention the impact on threatened & endangered species).

The headwaters of hundreds of miles of our streams are filled with millions of tons of mountaintops (overburden.)

This irresponsible excavation of coal makes the landscape so unsightly that it ruins tourism. (I can't envision tourists coming to see these barren wastelands!) Isn't tourism supposed to be our growth industry?

The timber and wood products industry employs some 30,000 in West Virginia. Prior to mountaintop removal, all of West Virginia's 11 million acres of forests were producing substantial volumes of high-value timber. Trees are our only renewable natural resource.

There are about 17,000 jobs in coal mining. The mining industry projects the coal reserves to be depleted within 20 years.

Mountaintop removal of coal employs just a few hundred of these workers. It is a sad irony that mountaintop removal actually destroys more coal mining jobs than it creates; union miners are expediently replaced by relatively few heavy-equipment operators.

Maxey resigned as director of the Division of Forestry in November 1998.

Bill Maxey on Mountain Top Removal
source: The Charleston Gazette

Bill Maxey served as director of the Division of Forestry from 1993 until 1998 when he resigned in protest against mountain top removal. Maxey was a tenured associate professor of forest management at West Virginia University, where he taught for 11 years. Maxey also has worked 15 years as a forester for Westvaco Corp., and seven years for Georgia Pacific.

The following quotes were taken from two articles in The Charleston Gazette

"I think mountaintop removal is analogous to serious disease, like AIDS..." Bill Maxey, Former Director of the WV Forestry Division in the Charleston Gazette
"...most mines strip topsoil and do not replace it."

"It will take 150 to 200 years before trees would become re-established following such a drastic" mining practice."

"It is a sad irony that mountaintop removal actually destroys more coal mining jobs than it creates; union miners are expediently replaced by relatively few heavy-equipment operators."

"This irresponsible excavation of coal makes the landscape so unsightly that it ruins tourism. (I can't envision tourists coming to see these barren wastelands!)"

"All native plant and animals are practically eliminated."

"In West Virginia, from 1977 to 1997, 300,000 acres were made into a moonscape by the decapitation of our mountains. Vast areas of our Mountain State are made uninhabitable for our citizens."

"Timber is the only renewable natural resource and the industry employs more than 30,000 people..."

"I resigned as a matter of principle, for I did not want to share in the blame nor guilt for the loss of West Virginia's heritage through the loss of our forested mountains."

In an interview with Bill Maxey (Not in The Charleston Gazette):

The over 300,000 acres already destroyed by mountain top removal would have grown 60,000,000 board feet of timber every year forever. 60,000,000 board feet of timber could have been cut every year forever, without reducing the timber mass, on what has already been destroyed.

--- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/07/2004 03:32 PM -----

"paintedtoes@yahoo.com"
To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
<paintedtoes
cc:
Subject: Please Stop Destructive Mountaintop

Removal Mining
01/06/2004 03:18
PM

Dear Mr. John Forren, Project Manager,

Please amend the EPA's draft ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT so as to limit the effects of harmful mountaintop removal mining.

The Bush administration should consider alternatives that reduce the environmental impacts of mountaintop removal and then implement measures to protect natural resources and communities in Appalachia, such as restrictions on the size of valley fills to reduce the destruction of streams, forests, wildlife and communities. I urge you to immediately amend the draft EIS accordingly.

Sincerely,

Julia Martin

Julia Martin
220 West 107th St. 2H
New York, NY 10025
paintedtoes@yahoo.com

Julian Martin
Date: 1/09/2004
City: Charleston State: WV Zip: 25314

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said the alternatives, offered in the EIS, to regulate mountaintop removal mining "cannot be interpreted as ensuring any improved environmental protection." One alternative should be the banning of the filling of any streams with mine waste and please don't then re-define mine waste as something nice. The fact that the National Mining Association is pleased with the EIS recommendations is sure proof they are as worthless as a bucket of warm spit. Very much for the mountains, are you? Julian Martin Outreach Chair, West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, 1525 Hampton Road Charleston, WV 25314

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (3ES30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

REC'D JAN 13 20

Dear Mr. Forren:

I live in eastern Kentucky. In this region we experience the negative impacts of mining every day. Many of us have water wells that have run dry or turned orange or black due to mining. More than 1,200 miles of our headwater streams have been buried or destroyed by valley fills. Almost 7 percent of our forests have been – or will soon be – leveled by mountaintop removal. Flooding in our communities is increasingly common and severe. We fear the day when the sludge ponds above our homes break – as they did in Martin County, KY in 2000 – burying us at the bottom of hundreds of millions of gallons of toxic sludge. Our quality of life has been shattered by excessive blasting that shakes our homes, cracks our foundations, and wrecks our peace.

Some call this area a national sacrifice zone. Living here, it feels more like a war zone.

It doesn't have to be this way. There are laws on the books to protect clean water, public safety and the environment. It is perfectly clear that mountaintop removal and valley fills are a violation of the federal Clean Water Act and the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act. These practices should be banned. The coal industry must not be allowed to destroy our homeland.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement on mountaintop removal and valley fills is a dangerous gift from the Bush administration to the coal industry. Instead of recommending ways to *stop* the destruction, the EIS proposes ways to make it easier for coal companies to level our mountains, bury our streams, and wreck our homeland. This is shameful and wrong.

I know first hand the terrible impacts of mountaintop removal and valley fills. I also believe we can build a better future for eastern Kentucky. We can have clean streams and a healthy forest and restore our quality of life. We can create good jobs for our people that don't wreck the environment. And we have to start down a different road now.

Take a stand. Enforce the law. Ban mountaintop removal and valley fills. Stop the coal industry from destroying everything that we value most. Start making choices that will benefit our children and yours.

Sincerely,

Name

Namon Martin
8038 Hwy 7 South
Tennant, TN 41862

10-4-2

1-9

REC'D JAN 08 2004

Mr. John Forren
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

January 5, 2004

Dear Mr. Forren:

I'm writing you out of my concern about the Bush administration's apparent lack of commitment to our natural environment. His priority seems to be to sacrifice natural resources for the sake of corporations and practices geared toward profit motive instead of human, animal, and land welfare.

Specifically, I'm upset about PLANS TO CONTINUE TO LET COAL COMPANIES DESTROY APPALACHIA WITH MINING PRACTICES THAT LEVEL OUR MOUNTAINTOPS, WIPE OUT FORESTS, BURY STREAMS, AND DESTROY COMMUNITIES. This is an abuse of our lands, waterways, habitats, and humanity!

This administration's draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on mountaintop removal coal mining, states that the environmental effects of mountaintop removal are widespread, devastating, and permanent. Yet the EIS draft proposes no restrictions on the size of valley fills that bury streams, no limits on the number of acres of forest that can be destroyed, no protections for imperiled wildlife, and no safeguards for the communities of people that depend on the region's natural resources for themselves and their future.

The Bush administration's "preferred alternative" for addressing the problems caused by mountaintop removal coal mining is to weaken existing environmental protections. This ignores the administration's own studies detailing the devastation caused by mountaintop removal coal mining. These include:

- over 1200 miles of streams have been damaged or destroyed by it
- forest losses in West Virginia have the potential of directly impacting as many as 244 vertebrate wildlife species
- without new limits on mountaintop removal, an additional 350 sq. mi. of mountains, streams, and forests will be flattened and destroyed by it

In light of these facts, I URGE YOU TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES THAT REDUCE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF MOUNTAINTOP REMOVAL. I am hopeful that the Environmental Protection Agency will place the welfare of the land, water, and habitat, as well as the humans depending on them, before the welfare of corporations that will destroy them needlessly and cruelly.

Sincerely,

Mary McAnally
Rev. Mary McAnally
76 N. Forttown
Tulsa, OK 74110-5214

1-10

First Name: James Last Name: McCarthy Letter Date: 1/2/2004
 City: Farmingdale State: NY Zip: 11735-1312

It is unconscionable that the Bush administration plans to continue to let coal companies destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests and bury streams in the valleys below. Mountaintop removal mining and valley fills should not be allowed and the laws and regulations that protect clean water must not be weakened. In particular, I oppose the proposal to change the stream buffer zone rule that prohibits mining activity within 100 feet of streams. This rule should be strictly enforced for valley fills and in all other cases. Mountain top mining for coal is a destructive method for coal extraction. This was made evident in an episode of Nova seen on PBS stations. The waste from the mountain top was dumped into a nearby valley. This in turn dammed the creek that ran through the valley. The damming of the creek changed the nearby town forcing residents to move. Eventually enough people moved from the town to cause business that were there for generations to close due to lack of business.

Eventually this town will become a bust leaving an additional scar to a once beautiful ecosystem and community. The mining company even had the audacity to say that they leave the mined mountain top better than when they found it. If they feel a flat mountain top is better then they have a perverse sense of beauty. What makes this request the most saddening is that I have write to you Mr. Forren, an administrator within the EPA, about protecting the environment. I think you and all of the EPA political appointees have forgotten what the purpose of the EPA is. On your webpage the mission of the EPA is clearly stated; EPA's mission is to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment ? air, water, and land ? upon which life depends. For 30 years, EPA has been working for a cleaner, healthier environment for the American people. Please remember this mission when you are making your recommendations about how we as a country can not allow mountain top mining. That instead of making it easier, we should be putting further restrictions. Finally, I also want to remind you that you and everyone from Mr. Mike Leavitt on down works to protect the environment and not to facilitate President Bush wishes on nullifying the great work that has been done over the last thirty years at protecting our environment.

Respectfully, James Mc Carthy

January 2, 2004

REC'D JAN 05 2004

Mr. John Forren
 U.S. EPA
 1650 Arch St.
 Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Forren I live in a small community which is completely surrounded by mountain top removal. Some of the strip mines are Calhoun, Jupiter, Horizon, Wind-River, Dakota and Massey Coal. There may be some more.

Our community is constantly being bombarded with explosives, dust, noise and severe flooding. I would like for you to imagine what it would be like to live in our circumstances. Our property is now worthless. If I could get a fair market value from selling my home and property, I would certainly do so. No one in their right mind would want to live here. As tax paying citizens I think its unfair that our community are subjected to the horrors of so-called mountain-top removal mining. It ruins our community and surrounding

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11-3-2

Respiratory illnesses are increasing - even in our children. Entire mountains cannot be removed without severe dust levels - which are poorly monitored.

I live in the small community of Cazy, Rt. 85, in Boone County, West Virginia.

Our mountains used to have an adequate supply of top soil, now we have rock. When it rains - even small amounts - the water gushes down the mountain with terrible force and gets our small hollows out into our highways blocking traffic & costing huge amounts in road repairs & personal property damage.

Many people are very busy today. Some have not written out of despair & hopelessness. Some have signed form letters which have been criticized by some in the Charleston Daily Mail, Newspaper. Yes, these ones should have found the time to write their personal thoughts and beliefs. I read some of the form letters and they express our firm convictions even though they are not hand-written. I pray they will be counted respectfully.

Sincerely,
Dora L. McCarty
P.O. Box 94
Bob White, WV 25028

10-5-2

17-1-2

3-3

REC'D NOV 26

My name is Corbado McCarty and I am 12 years old. I live in a house on a small hill in the town of Cazy. We have mines all around us. Dakota, Calista, Supib, Horizon, Men-River, Missy, and a few more surround us. When they blast, our house feels like it's going to detach from the foundation. Plates fall off tables and break. Wall knobs fall off the wall. The Dakota Mine is 10 ft deeper than our well. It may be contaminated with arsenic.

When it floods, the town of Bob-White has to be evacuated. People say it's an act of God. (I'll tell you right now, it is not an act of God and even I can see that. It is because of 1 simple reason. Yes, it is because of the environment, rain, and the natural process but it was never this bad before.

We haven't any mountains to keep the water in, so it runs down the mountains (what is left of them), into our rivers and streams, which in turn rise with the extra water.

16-1-2

5-2-2

17-2-2

REC'D JAN 09 2004

January 5, 2004

Mr. John Forren EPA
 U.S. EPA (3EA30)
 1650 Arch St.
 Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. John Forren EPA,

It is unconscionable that the Bush administration plans to continue to let coal companies destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests and bury streams in the valleys below. Mountaintop removal mining and valley fills should not be allowed and the laws and regulations that protect clean water must not be weakened. In particular, I oppose the proposal to change the stream buffer zone rule that prohibits mining activity within 100 feet of streams. This rule should be strictly enforced for valley fills and in all other cases.

I'm disappointed and angry that the federal government ignored its own studies when it proposed weakening, rather than strengthening, protections for people and the environment. I do not support any of the three alternatives contained within the Environmental Impact Statement Report. All three options will make it easier for companies to destroy streams, endangering wildlife and nearby communities.

May I make a fourth, better option which will solve the problem of acquiring needed mineral resources, reduce harmful mining effects, and create tens of thousands of new jobs instantly? It boggles my mind that so few in charge of government understand the simplicity of national mandatory recycling programs to recover the huge amounts of resources that so often go to waste in some landfill. All manufacturers must be required to "take back" their own products for reconditioning or dismantling. Since they made them, they know best what is in them, and how best to break it down into recyclable raw materials. Product design should facilitate easier steps to accommodate it's eventual demise.

The EPA or any number of agencies could share responsibilities for enforcing this "post-use decommission and dismantle" program. Sure, consumers and manufacturers will have to share shipping cost increases associated with returning all expired products back to their maker, but this cost would be offset by the creation of jobs. The end result is more economic expansion and less ecological destruction, and wouldn't that make the EPA look good?

We would be following in the footsteps of other "greener" nations who believe sustainable living requires less consumption and more recycling. The minor cost increase will be worth every penny, because the alternative (more permanent environmental destruction and habitat loss) is unthinkable. I challenge you to take these sustainable ideas and press them forward to your superiors. Don't do it just for me, or for your own

If I, being 12 years old, can see this, then these companies can, too. But they do not care about the people. It's all about money, money, money. There is coal in other places. They do not have to blast the tops of our mountain off to get it. The earth has been forming for millions of years. We are not going to run out. Please stop mountain top removal. It's a very ugly, destructive thing.

Sincerely Yours,

Kerry McClure

career enhancement; do it for all the generations yet to come.

Sincerely,



Kerry McClure
1501 W Washington St
Rm 203
Phoenix, AZ 85007-3222

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/09/2004 02:51 PM -----

kmcclure@courts.sp.
state.az.us

To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA

cc:

01/05/2004 04:11 PM

Subject: Don't fill our streams with waste materials

Dear Mr. John Forren EPA,

It is unconscionable that the Bush administration plans to continue to let coal companies destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests and bury streams in the valleys below. Mountaintop removal mining and valley fills should not be allowed and the laws and regulations that protect clean water must not be weakened. In particular, I oppose the proposal to change the stream buffer zone rule that prohibits mining activity within 100 feet of streams. This rule should be strictly enforced for valley fills and in all other cases. I'm disappointed and angry that the federal government ignored its own studies when it proposed weakening, rather than strengthening, protections for people and the environment. I do not support any of the three alternatives contained within the Environmental Impact Statement Report. All three options will make it easier for companies to destroy streams, endangering wildlife and nearby communities.

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Don't fill our streams with waste materials It is unconscionable that the Bush administration plans to continue to let coal companies destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests and bury streams in the valleys below. Mountaintop removal mining and valley fills should not be allowed and the laws and regulations that protect clean water must not be weakened. In particular, I oppose the proposal to change the stream buffer zone rule that prohibits mining activity within 100 feet of streams. This rule should be strictly enforced for valley fills and in all other cases. I'm disappointed and angry that the federal government ignored its own studies when it proposed weakening, rather than strengthening, protections for people and the environment. I do not support any of the three alternatives contained within the Environmental Impact Statement Report. All three options will make it easier for companies to destroy streams, endangering wildlife and nearby communities.

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May I make a fourth, better option which will solve the problem of acquiring needed mineral resources, reduce harmful mining effects, and create tens of thousands of new jobs instantly? It boggles my mind that so few in charge of government understand the simplicity of national mandatory recycling programs to recover the huge amounts of resources that so often go to waste in some landfill. All manufacturers must be

how best to break it down into recyclable raw materials. Product design should facilitate easier steps to accommodate it's eventual demise. The EPA or any number of agencies could share responsibilities for enforcing this "post-use decommission and dismantle" program. Sure, consumers and manufacturers will have to share shipping cost increases associated with returning all expired products back to their maker, but this cost would be offset by the creation of jobs. The end result is more economic expansion and less ecological destruction, and wouldn't that make the EPA look good? We would be following in the footsteps of other "greener" nations who believe sustainable living requires less consumption and more recycling. The minor cost increase will be worth every penny, because the alternative (more permanent environmental destruction and habitat loss) is unthinkable. I challenge you to take these sustainable ideas and press them forward to your superiors. Don't do it just for me, or for your own career enhancement; do it for all the generations yet to come.

Sincerely,

Kerry McClure
1501 W Washington St
Rm 203
Phoenix, AZ 85007-3222

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/12/2004 02:49 PM -----

mcjwva@aol.com
To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
01/06/2004 11:02 AM cc:
Subject: Comments on draft programmatic EIS on mountaintop removal coal mining

Mr. John Forren
U.S. EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Forren,

It is completely ridiculous for anyone to think that hundreds of acres of mountaintops can be devastated with earth moving machines, and the surrounding inhabitants, INCLUDING HUMANS, of that area won't also be devastated as well!!!

We have had it with the pollution in our water, air, and the disastrous flooding!!!

Do something that you know is right!!! Sleep in peace tonight!!!
Don't let money rule over human and environmental rights!!!

PROTECT WEST VIRGINIA'S NATURAL BEAUTY, IT'S VALUABLE AND LIFE SUSTAINING RESOURCES, AND THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF IT'S RESIDENTS

Sincerely,

Chelena McCoy
218 Ely Fork Rd
Sumterco, West Virginia 25567

cc:
Senator John Rockefeller
Representative Nick Rahall
Senator Robert Byrd

1-9

796 W Outer Drive
Oak Ridge, TN
December 16, 2003

REC'D DEC 22 2003

John Forren
U.S. EPA (3ES30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Draft Environmental Impact Statement on Mountaintop Removal Mining, May 2003

I am opposed to the proposed rule changes that make it easier to get permits for mountaintop removal and to eliminate protection for streams. I am also opposed to the three alternatives in the DEIS; none of these will protect our water or our communities.

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The communities and mountains of Appalachia are too precious to subject to the devastation of mountaintop removal.

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The nation needs stronger protection from impacts of mining instead of expedited permitting. The coal removed will be burned once (with further damage to the environment), but damage from the mining will persist.

I urge EPA to redo this impact statement giving more weight to the long term interests of the country.

Sincerely,

Harold McCurdy
Harold McCurdy

cc: Pres. George W. Bush
Rep. Zach Wamp
Sen. Bill Frist
Sen. Lamar Alexander

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/07/2004 03:42 PM -----

"lesmcf@juno.com"

<lesmcf To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA

cc:

01/07/2004 09:24

Subject: Please Stop Destructive Mountaintop

Removal Mining
AM

Dear Mr. John Forren, Project Manager,

For God's sake, Mr. Forren, have you no respect for the future of our country? I strongly urge you to amend the EPA's draft environmental impact statement so as to limit the effects of harmful mountaintop removal mining. I find it unconscionable that your agency plans to continue to let coal companies destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests, bury streams and destroy communities.

1-9

Sincerely,

Howard McFann
9210 High Point drive
Lake Park, FL 33408
lesmcf@juno.com

--- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 01:43 PM ---

JohnmcFerrin@aol.
com To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc:
01/06/2004 03:43 PM Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Sir or Madam:

Please consider these as my comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on Mountaintop Removal/Valley Fills.

While the technical portions of the draft contain some useful information, the recommendations and proposed alternatives are an embarrassment. The agencies involved gathered all this data on the harmful environmental effects of mountaintop removal mining. They responded to these effects by proposing alternatives for reshuffling permitting responsibilities among agencies.

What is the point of that? Why go through the entire NEPA process if all you can come out with is a reshuffling of agency responsibilities. There are no alternatives suggesting how we could do mountaintop removal in a more environmentally sound manner. There is no alternative that we do not do it at all. The only alternatives proposed are that we keep doing it in the same way we always have, causing the same damage the Draft documents. The pseudo-alternatives offered are that we choose among different agencies to preside over the environmental devastation.

If the agencies involved are not embarrassed by this then I can only conclude that they have reached the point where they are beyond embarrassment.

The only way the agencies can fix this Draft is to shred it. Having done that, they can try again, including proposing specific actions that would minimize the environmental effects of mountaintop removal mining. The alternatives should include not doing it at all. By "actions" I do not mean more suggestions for paper shuffling or ponderings on which agency should preside over the present course of environmental devastation. I mean real, on the ground, action that change the way we mine, including whether we mine by this method at all.

I am familiar with the comments filed by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. I agree with those comments and wish to adopt them as my own.

Sincerely,

John McFerrin
114 Beckley Avenue
Beckley, WV 25801

January 3, 2004

Mr. John Forren EPA
U.S. EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. John Forren EPA,

It is unconscionable that the Bush administration plans to continue to let coal companies destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests and bury streams in the valleys below. Mountaintop removal mining and valley fills should not be allowed and the laws and regulations that protect clean water must not be weakened. In particular, I oppose the proposal to change the stream buffer zone rule that prohibits mining activity within 100 feet of streams. This rule should be strictly enforced for valley fills and in all other cases.

This is another fine example of the President's big-business-knows-best philosophy. Please don't forget what the "P" stands for in EPA. You are supposed to be a steward of our natural treasures and our clean air and water, not a protector of the interests of Mr. Bush's big corporate campaign contributors. Please do your job.

Thank you.

Scott McGarrity
9230 Estate Cove Circle
Riverview, FL 33569

Sincerely,


Scott McGarrity
9230 Estate Cove Cir
Riverview, FL 33569-3103

REC'D JAN 06

REC'D JAN 06

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Mr. John Forren
U.S. E.P.A. (3EPA3D)
1650 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Carol McGeehan
508 West 31st
Holland Mich 49423
Dec 18, 2003

REC'D DEC 22 2003

Dear Mr. Forren:

Please include my concerns in the public comment on the Environmental Impact Statement on mountaintop mining. The May 29, 2003 draft EIS fails to adequately address ways to reduce dramatically the environmental harm from mountaintop mining. This practice has destroyed more than 700 miles of streams in the Appalachian region since 1985, by blasting the tops of mountain peaks and pushing millions of tons of the rubble into surrounding valleys and streams. The EPA must not weaken environmental protections that should protect against the devastation caused by mountaintop mining. The EPA's mandate is to protect the environment, not the profits of mining companies. Please address these concerns in the Environmental Impact Statement on mountaintop removal.

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"M. McGeorge"

<mandw@charter.net> To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc: IMAGINEMEW@aol.com
Subject: Mountain Top Removal
08/16/03 11:45 PM

Mr. John Forren, USEPA

It is grossly unfair to the citizens of West Virginia to pollute and deform our beautiful state by scraping off the tops of mountains and dumping the rubble in our mountain streams. In the process, owners of adjacent lands have their property values destroyed as well.

11-3-2

The interests of the state and the majority of its people are being trampled in order to enhance the profits of the coal industry.

West Virginia's future is in marketing our beautiful mountain places for tourism and these very places are being destroyed as we discuss it.

11-7-2

I believe that the majority of WV voters will remember this blatant injustice the next time we go to the polls.

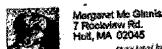
Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/06/2004 03:55 PM -----

jhmwva@aol.com
 To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
 01/02/2004 05:51 PM
 cc: Subject: Comments on Draft programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on mountaintop removal coal mining

*I am writing to urge that
 the Draft Environmental Impact
 Statement on mountaintop mining
 be strengthened to adequately
 protect the mountain
 dramatically reduce the
 environmental harm from
 such mining.*

1-10

REC'D JAN 05 2004



REC'D JAN 05 2004

*MR. JOHN FURAN
 U.S. EPA (JEAD)
 1650 ARCH ST.
 PHILADELPHIA PA 19103*

Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Impact Statement,

Everyone knows how destructive mountaintop removal mining is to forests, streams and wildlife. I find it hard to believe that my President is not trying to find some way to reduce its impact, but instead is encouraging it to take place faster.

1-9

Please try to find some way to protect our natural resources and communities in West Virginia instead of encouraging their destruction.

Thank you sincerely,

Judith McHugh

Sincerely,

Judith McHugh
 2008 Northwood Road
 Charleston, West Virginia 25314

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/30/2004 11:21 AM -----

Meagan McKay
<shmcgg4@yahoo.co
m> To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc:
Subject: Mountain Top Mining Draft EIS Comments
01/14/2004 08:26
AM

Meagan McKay
8B Hickok Place
Burlington, VERMONT 05401

January 14, 2004

John Forren
US EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Forren:

I oppose the Bush administration plans to continue to let coal companies destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, wipe out forests and bury streams in the valleys below. While I have no loyalties to any one particular party, I am a registered voter who takes environmental issues very seriously, as do many of my peers. Please take the time to objectively consider this issue, and ask yourselves if the benefits from environmental destruction can honestly outweigh a global cost that is immeasurable.

Sincerely,

Meagan McKay

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----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 01:59 PM -----

"camckenzie@yahoo
.com" <camckenzie To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc:
01/06/2004 02:57 Subject: Please Stop Destructive Mountaint
Removal Mining
PM

Dear Mr. John Forren, Project Manager,

Dear Mr. Forren,

Mountaintop removal mining which buries streams in the process is OBVIOUSLY a bad thing. Why is this even being considered? It's all about money and power. Please do your job and protect the environment.

The Bush administration must consider alternatives that reduce the environmental impacts of mountaintop removal and then implement measures to protect natural resources and communities in Appalachia, such as restrictions on the size of valley fills to reduce the destruction of streams, forests, wildlife and communities. I urge you to immediately amend the draft EIS accordingly.

Sincerely,

Catherine McKenzie
19830 133rd PL SE
Renton, WA 98058
camckenzie@yahoo.com

1-5

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 12/18/2003 05:21 PM -----

Mountaintop@EPA
removal mining

Bonni McKeown
<barrelhbonni@hotmail.com>
11/04/2003 02:40 PM

To: R3
cc:
Subject: mountaintop

Our beautiful state has been devastated by mountaintop removal mining. Whatever the technicalities, cutting off mountains and filling streams and valleys with waste is environmentally harmful and a crime against nature. The new environmental impact statement needs to reflect the monumental cumulative effects of this type of mining.

Bonni McKeown, P.O. Box M, Capon Springs WV 26023

9-2-2

CATHERINE

MCLAUGHLIN
<moncottage@msn.com>
08/20/03 08:25 PM

To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc:
Subject: Mountaintop Mining

<?xml:namespace prefix="v" /><?xml:namespace prefix="o" />
Please stop mountaintop mining in West Virginia or anywhere else for that matter. It is insane to destroy perfectly natural environments for the sake of justifying jobs. The impact of these action are very destructive. Including flooding potentials, contaminating waters, destroying streams, animal habitats, as well as human beings.

Please stop!!!!

Cathe McLaughlin
100 Saddlerock Road
Lynchburg, VA 24503

1-9

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/12/2004 02:49 PM -----

Corinna Therese
McMackin To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
<cmcmacki@darkwing.u cc:
oregon.edu> Subject: Draft MTR/VF EIS comment

01/06/2004 11:41 AM

Corinna McMackin
1050 Lorane HWY
Eugene, OR 97405

Mr. John Forren
2004
U.S. EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

January 6,

Dear Mr. Forren,

I am writing today to share my comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement on mountaintop removal mining/valley fills released May 29, 2003. The DEIS claims to work toward "[effecting] better environmental protection for mountaintop mining and valley fill operations." The draft's studies articulate the widespread, irreversible ecological damage caused by MTR/VF practices. Nevertheless, the alternatives proposed in the draft suggest a weakening of current laws and regulations in favor of developing a more efficient mining process. This stated purpose of and the recommendations made within the DEIS are in conflict with one another.

I oppose the alternatives outlined in the DEIS. I disagree with the suggestion to dismiss the application of the 100-ft stream buffer zone identified in SMCRA to valley fill construction, and I challenge the legitimacy of a DEIS that fails to examine a full-range of alternatives as required by NEPA. The May 2003 DEIS does not analyze real alternatives to MTR/VF mining. The 2003 DEIS dismisses alternatives proposed in the preliminary draft (January 2001), which analyzed placing real limits on the size of mountaintop removal valley fills. Furthermore, the draft fails to include a No MTR/VF Mining alternative. Considering the permanent ecological damage of MTR/VF, the falling coal-related employment rates, and the disproportionately high rates of poverty in top-coal producing counties across

Appalachia, a No MTR/VF Mining alternative should be a consideration in the DEIS.

The MTR/VF EIS is the product of community opposition to conditions created by MTR/VF operations. These same community groups call not for a stop to coal-mining in general, but rather for an end to the destructive nature of MTR/VF operations. I believe that if the EIS is going to fulfill either its commitment to the original plaintiffs in the Bragg V. Robertson case or its obligation to a full-range of alternative as provided by NEPA, then the EIS is required to analyze a No MTR/VF Mining alternative.

The agency-sanctioned terms overburden and interburden reflect an official climate that has favored a vision of Appalachia as coal. These terms reduce the mixed mesophytic forest to a burden above or between seams of coal. This narrow vision of the use and value of Appalachia's coalfields is reproduced in the DEIS. It is reflected in the federal and state agencies failure to consider alternatives to MTR/VF coal-mining. It is due to the agencies' inability to see or evaluate alternatives to MTR/VF coal-mining, as required by law under NEPA and requested by citizen-action groups, that I feel the current DEIS should be deemed insufficient. I believe the study should be continued with additional attention paid to community-identified impacts as well as community-based alternatives to MTR/VF mining.

Sincerely,

Corinna McMackin

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4-2

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/08/2004 11:39 AM -----

James McMillin
 <jmcmil55@bellsouth.net> To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
 cc:
 Subject: Mountaintop removal
 12/30/2003 03:07 PM

22845 Lenora Dr.
 Woodland Hills, CA 91367
 January 20, 2004

REC'D JAN 26 2004

Mr. John Forren
 U.S. EPA (3 EA 30)
 1650 Arch St.
 Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Forren,

Tell the Bush administration not to weaken environmental protections that apply to the companies that are conducting mountaintop removal. Mining companies in Appalachia are blowing off tops of mountains and dumping tons of waste into valleys below. This buries streams and devastates forests & ruins communities.

Sincerely,
 Elizabeth G. McMahon

1-10

Mr. John Forren
 Project Manager
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (3EA30)
 1650 Arch Street
 Philadelphia, PA 19103
 Email: mountaintop.r3@epa.gov

I, along with most other Kentuckians want you to stop destructive mountaintop removal mining.

Mountaintop removal coal mining is a form of strip mining in which coal companies search for coal throughout Appalachia by literally blasting hundreds of feet off the tops of mountains, pushing millions of tons of mining waste rubble into surrounding valleys and burying hundreds of miles of streams. The Bush administration has released a draft environmental impact statement assessing the effects of mountaintop removal mining that confirms that the resulting environmental and social harms are severe and mostly irreversible.

More than 1200 miles of streams already have been buried, damaged or destroyed; hundreds of square miles of forested mountains flattened; and generations-old

1-9

communities of coalfield residents have been forced from their homes by this extremely destructive mining practice. To avoid additional and significant devastation of the Appalachian region's natural resources -- and of the communities that depend on those resources -- mountaintop removal must be much more strictly limited. Indeed, without new limits on mountaintop removal, an additional 350 square miles of mountains, streams, and forests will soon be flattened and destroyed.

Although the administration's environmental impact statement is supposed to suggest ways to limit the environmental harm caused by mountaintop removal, the Bush administration is proposing just the opposite: it wants to allow mountaintop removal to continue and even make it *easier* for coal mining companies to obtain permits for this form of mining.

This kind of typical double speak from this administration and trashing of decades of beneficial environmental work has got to stop from the inside out or we will be forced to change it from the outside with our votes in the next election.

Sincerely,

James and Carla McMillin

John Forren
U.S. EPA (3ES30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

August 18, 2003

Dear Mr. Forren:

I find it completely astonishing that anyone could read the recent Environmental Impact Study regarding mountaintop removal and yet still believe that the solution is to further weaken the current lukewarm regulations that apply to all aspects of coal mining in the Appalachian region.

The report clearly documents the extensive damage done to our land, forests, water and ecosystems by mountaintop removal and valley fills. Not only that, but the report provides strong evidence for banning mountaintop removal altogether. Yet the recommendations in the report itself totally ignore the findings of the study and instead propose actions that would mean more mountaintop removal with even fewer protections for people and the environment.

As I understand it, the original purpose of the report were to look for ways to IMPROVE agency programs under the Clean Water Act, Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) and Endangered Species Act (ESA) that will contribute to REDUCING the adverse environmental impacts of mountaintop removal operations and excess spoil valley fills in Appalachia. Then, when the report was finished in 2000, the Bush Administration refused to release it because it didn't like the results!!! This is a travesty of the democratic system. When an administration denies public access to information it is very clear that the administration is not interested in the public welfare but is in collusion with the big corporations that own the coal companies and other entities in charge of the devastation of the environment.

This lack of concern for the people and the environment is made even clearer when one reads the "Alternatives" #1, 2 or 3 contained within the EIS report, which are no alternatives at all, but simply more ideas to make it easier for the coal companies. None of these recommendations will protect our stream and forest ecosystems. They will not protect our communities. In fact, the recommendations have no relation to the problems caused by mountaintop removal mining and valley fills as documented in the studies.

Instead, in its continuing quest to go down in history as the presidential administration with the worst environmental record, the Bush administration has used the EIS process to propose rule changes to make it even easier for coal companies to get permits for mountaintop removal and to eliminate protections for streams. Doing away with the "buffer zone" rule that protects streams from the effects of coal mining is merely an early Christmas present to the coal companies that makes it even easier for them to get permits for mountaintop removal and valley fills, the most blatantly destructive mining method ever used. It ignores the science and evidence about what mountaintop removal mining is doing and ignores the public's demand for clean water, healthy environment and safe communities.

The report itself is misleading for several reasons.

- It calls for "harmonizing" federal regulations, which simply means reducing all regulations to the lowest common denominator and therefore the least effective and meaningful rules; and requires "science-based methods," which is a particularly devious way to ensure that

REC'D AUG 26

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coalfield residents cannot strengthen regulations to prevent more damage by the coal industry without "conclusive" scientific proof.

- The report rejects without any meaningful consideration all proposals that would have restricted the use of valley fills or enforced existing laws. There is plenty of scientific evidence – and a strong legal case – that documents the widespread and irreversible damage the coal industry is doing to our region. Leveling mountains and burying streams is wrong and must stop.
- The report recommends weakening existing laws and regulations that protect clean water, including doing away with the 25-year-old "stream buffer zone" rule because it calls into question the use of valley fills and creates "confusion," and re-defining some streams out of existence.

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If mountaintop removal is allowed to continue, there will be no streams – and hence no water sources – left in the Appalachian region. As it is, we have lost 724 miles of streams, and another 1,200 miles have been adversely affected, due to both mountaintop removal and the concerted effort at lack of enforcement by all the agencies involved. Even without further relaxing the regulations, the Appalachians will lose 2,200 square miles of forest by 2012, as a direct result of coal-mining operations. In addition, 600 square miles of land and another 1,000 miles of streams will be destroyed. This will make the land uninhabitable, rendering thousands more people homeless. Hundreds of people have already lost homes, water, and property due to uncompensated damage by coal companies.

It is imperative that the government pay very close attention to its own report. Not only can we not relax the current regulations, we also need additional restrictions and enforcement requirements. Mountaintop removal cannot be allowed to continue as a coal extraction method. Even beyond the environmental devastation, it is economically the least beneficial method to the communities in which it occurs.

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I moved from middle Tennessee to eastern Kentucky ten years ago and was impressed by the beauty of the mountains of Appalachia. Those mountains are disappearing, being plowed over into the green valleys to leave a brown treeless moonscape (reclamation laws are rarely, if ever, enforced). This is the legacy of mountaintop removal. The people causing this rampant ruin – including President Bush – do not live here, do not have to see it, and are at no risk of having their homes, property, and their very lives destroyed by it. We must stop mountaintop removal before there are no mountains left to remove.

Thank you for your time,

Janet C. McReynolds

Janet Comperry McReynolds
Krypton, KY

cc: President George W. Bush

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 12/11/2003 04:40 PM -----

Shawn Meagher
<SA-MEAGHER1@WU.EDU>
To: R3
Cc:
Subject: 61455 Stop
12/05/2003 11:52 AM

December 05, 2003

John Forren, Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. EPA (3EA30)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Mr. Forren,

Will you please stop the move to weaken regulations on mountaintop mining in the Appalachian Mountains? I am a biologist who has recently vacationed in West Virginia. I was struck by the beauty of this region. Mountaintop mining destroys biodiversity and harms the health of our people.

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I oppose the alternatives proposed in your recent Environmental Impact Statement, which ignore the detrimental environmental impacts of this activity.

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As a US citizen, I ask you to please implement stronger NOT weaker regulations for this practice, and I wholeheartedly support the recommendations from the organization, American Rivers (attached below).

Thanks for your time.

Shawn Meagher

AMERICAN RIVERS SAYS:
I am opposed to any changes that would weaken the laws and regulations that protect our rivers and streams from the effects of mountaintop mining and valley fills. As a result, I am opposed to each of the alternatives evaluated in your

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May 29, 2003 draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

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Your draft EIS contains indisputable evidence of the devastating and irreversible environmental harm caused by mountaintop mining. Other agency studies also show that mountaintop mining contributes to flooding disasters in mountain communities. Unfortunately, each of the alternatives in the draft EIS ignores the findings of these studies and the very purpose of the EIS- to find ways to minimize, to the maximum extent practical, the environmental consequences of mountaintop mining. The draft EIS does not examine a single alternative that would reduce those impacts.

Worse, your "preferred alternative" would clearly increase the damage from mountaintop mining by eliminating the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act's buffer zone rule that prohibits mining activities that disturb any area within 100 feet of larger streams, eliminating the current limit on using nationwide permits to approve valley fills in West Virginia that are larger than 250 acres, and giving the Office of Surface Mining a significant new role in Clean Water Act permitting for mountaintop mining (a role it does not have under current law).

Our environmental laws require, and the citizens of the region deserve, a full evaluation of ways to reduce the unacceptable impacts of mountaintop mining. I urge you to abandon your "preferred alternative" and to reevaluate a full range of options that will minimize the enormous environmental and economic damage caused by mountaintop mining and valley fills.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Shawn Meagher
314 1/2 S Randolph
Macomb, IL 61455-2236
USA
SA-MEAGHER13WIU.EDU

4-2

9 Allen St, Apt B
Burlington VT 05401

REC'D JAN 14 2004

January 10, 2004

Dear Mr. Forren:

I am writing to express my extreme disapproval of the preferred alternative outlined in the mountaintop removal coal mining EIS. The EIS shows that mountaintop mining causes significant + irreversible environmental harm, with demonstrated poor success in restoring damaged areas. It is therefore in very poor judgement that the Bush Administration has decided to weaken the laws that regulate this practice. 1-13

The ^{scientific} findings of the EIS ~~should be used to~~ support an alternative that increases the regulation of this harmful mining practice. Please reject the current preferred alternative and protect the important natural resources that are being jeopardized. Thank you for your consideration. 1-13

Sincerely,
Colby Mecham

REC'D JAN 26 2004

Re: Mountaintop removal

Dear Mr. Forren,

I am strongly opposed to the Bush administration's plans to allow coal companies to continue to destroy Appalachia with mining practices that level mountaintops, eliminate forests and bury streams in the valleys below. The land can never be fully restored to its pristine state. Mountaintop removal mining should not be allowed. The Federal government ought to strengthen laws protecting the environment.

Sincerely
Elaine Melnick

E. Melnick
18331 Karen Dr
Livermore, CA 94556

----- Forwarded by David Rider/R3/USEPA/US on 01/07/2004 03:42 PM -----

"Barbara@StorylineArts.com"
<Barbara
To: R3 Mountaintop@EPA
cc:
Subject: Please Stop Destructive Mountaintop Removal Mining
01/06/2004 02:06 PM

Dear Mr. John Forren, Project Manager,

I worked in Appalachia in the early '70s, and I saw the devastating effects of strip mining. And I revisited Kentucky last year—near Hyden—and again saw the ecological trauma of the coal companies on the environment.. I urge you not to support mountaintop removal.
Barbara Mendelsohn
161 E. Valley View
Ashland, OR 97520
Barbara@StorylineArts.com

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